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Columbia University **FORUM**

*The Histrionaut* *Paul Seabury*

*Reflections on Democracy and Communism* *Reinhold Niebuhr*

*Beckett by the Madeleine* *Tom F. Driver*

*Suicide in Denmark* *Herbert Hendin*

*ABC of Translation* *Richard Howard*

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## *A Quarterly Journal of Fact and Opinion*

The *COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY FORUM* is sent without charge to 100,000 alumni of record, faculty members, and friends of Columbia University. As its title implies, the magazine brings together the views of individual contributors, all of whom have a connection, as members or alumni, with the University. The magazine expresses no consensus and no institutional policy on the subjects discussed by the authors. While taking no responsibility, the University gives a hearing to divergent ideas in the interests of thought and discussion.

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# LETTERS

## Levy pro and con

● Edgar Levy's "Notes Toward a Program for Painting" [Spring 1961] is a masterfully deft and inclusive survey of the ridiculous nonentity that has blighted the plastic arts in our time. Such an exposition has been long overdue, and I hope it receives wide attention.

LINCOLN ROTHSCHILD  
1923 B. A., Columbia College  
1933 M. A., Graduate Faculties  
Dobbs Ferry, New York

● Edgar Levy's article confuses me somewhat . . . But I think his point is that one should paint only what one has seen with his eyes. This would rule out not [just] the abstract expressionists but the central panel of the Ghent altarpiece.

DAVIDSON TAYLOR  
Director, Arts Center Program  
Columbia University

● What! No mention of Matisse?  
LEONARD KIRSCHENBAUM  
New York City

## From Eric Ambler

● Perhaps I may add a footnote to Curtis Carroll Davis' thoughtful essay on spy stories ["Speak To Me Softly"; Spring 1961].

In some British newspaper accounts of the recent Russian spying trial in London, details were given of the contents of the *apparat* headquarters, a house in the London suburb of Ruislip, bought in 1956 by Peter and Helen Kroger. The

F.B.I. knew the pair as Morris and Lora Cohen of New York, and Colonel Abel, convicted of spying by an American court in 1957, was carrying their photographs when he was arrested. Lord Chief Justice Parker, before sentencing them to twenty years apiece, described them as "professional spies." They undoubtedly were.

It is not surprising, therefore, that in addition to the hidden trapdoors, the clandestine radio transmitter, the photographic darkroom with micro-dot film equipment, the money concealed in the roof and walls, the talcum container with the false bottom, and the lighter with the secret compartment, the house should also contain professional reference books: *Codes and Cyphers*, *Cryptography—the Science of Secret Writing*, *The Downfall of the German Secret Service*, and so on.

It is disconcerting, however, to learn that along with these books was a copy (though only in a paperback edition, I regret to say) of *Epitaph for a Spy* by Eric Ambler. It can scarcely have been used for reference purposes. For recreation then? Hardly. While Mr. Davis may be right in claiming "natural fascinations" for the spy story, a professional spy's willingness to suspend disbelief must surely have, in this area at least, a very remote threshold. Perhaps Mrs. Kroger, tidying up the place, had thrust it in among the reference books with that sort of unconscious sense of order which can sometimes place *Alice Through the Looking Glass* alongside the *Stock Exchange Yearbook*.

Yet why did they buy it in the first place? If they were looking for laughs, a glance through it would have told them that the book's attitude toward their profession was unromantic, even contemptuous. There must be another explanation. Perhaps they didn't buy it.

Graham Greene, in *The Spy's Bedside Book*, reported that while gathering material for that anthology, he discovered that one secret service had a standing order at a big bookstore for any book, fact or fiction, which as much as mentioned the word "spy." It would be interesting to know if, in this particular copy

of *Epitaph for a Spy* there is stamped on the flyleaf the Russian equivalent of "Read, Initial, and Pass On."

I hope there isn't though. I prefer to think that the Krogers themselves bought it, and did so simply because they liked the title.

ERIC AMBLER  
Los Angeles, California

## Grass-roots theatre

● Proof of Eric Bentley's pudding regarding the latent hunger for High Art in the theatre ["The Classic Theatre in Modern Life"; Spring 1961] lies closer at hand in time than the Federal Theater, and closer in space than France. Shakespeare in Central Park under Joseph Papp's direction deserves the Order of Merit for proving not only how many superlative players can be recruited for such productions, but how vast is the untapped audience ready and eager to witness them.

ISABEL CARY-LUNDBERG  
1947 M. A., Graduate Faculties  
New York City

## Cort's judgment

● David Cort's comments on my book, *A & P: A Study in Price-Cost Behavior and Public Policy*, ["I've Been Reading"; Spring 1961] are as generous as they are unexpected—the book was written for a narrow circle of economists and lawyers. But he has certainly got its essence, which is that the subtlety of events is at least as great as the wit of man, and is worth the effort of unraveling. Perhaps Mr. Cort is not altogether fair to our Poujadists, who champion the Robinson-Patman Act and the mysterious virtues of "small business"; they deceive themselves at least as much as they do others.

M. A. ADELMAN  
Dept. of Economics and  
Social Science  
Massachusetts Institute of  
Technology

Further comments on Edgar Levy's "Notes Toward a Program for Painting" and David Cort's "I've Been Reading: On Lying" appear in our *Before the House* department, beginning on page 44.—EDITOR

# THE HISTRONAUT

by PAUL SEABURY

## I

When Ruggiero and Parkinson, in the course of their research at the Center of Astronautical Projects in late 1965, discovered the principle of infra-temporal mobility, they experienced the simultaneous delight and horror which is so common today among sensitive scientists. That it was theoretically possible for man to move backward in time had long been the routine inspiration of countless science fiction stories. The idea of the time-machine had been a traditional absurdity. Now it was realized—and would be let loose upon the real world of men for them to make of what they would. That it was a very dangerous discovery to have made, neither man would deny; but also, as Ruggiero reminded Parkinson during their brief moment of euphoria, the thing did have its peaceful uses, not the least of which was this: it could free man from the chafing restraints of temporal existence—what an achievement. Space and time had *both* been conquered. On this note of triumph and self-exculpation, they adjourned from the Center of Astronautical Projects to spend several days in the nearby pleasure-palaces of Santa Fe, fully to enjoy the present before announcing man's liberation from it.

General Thayer, the Director of the C.A.P., was quick to perceive the implications of the Ruggiero-Parkinson principle and acted swiftly according to instinct and training; Ruggiero and Parkinson soon found themselves captives of

their own liberative principle, surrounded by staff and research committees intent on exploring the full military implications of this appalling discovery. The General, thanks to his intuitive awareness of the extraordinary importance of their brains to national defense, surrounded the two, as well, by a most complex security system. Quite probably, of course, it was already too late—for as early as the spring of 1962, Ruggiero had imprudently published, in the *Journal of Space Science*, his first paper (the essential one in fact), in which was described his hypothesis: that space and time could be selectively reversed, and time transformed into a traversable geographic panorama. Somewhere in the Soviet Union *this much* was known already, then. At all events, official pessimism was in order.

And so Ruggiero and Parkinson vanished into the inaccessible federal lands of the New Mexico desert. The initiative having now passed wholly from their hands, Parkinson turned his attention to other playful theoretical matters, and Ruggiero, less resourceful, became a furtive and querulous bystander in the vast enterprise which his imagination had unleashed. Indeed, as his own consternation increased, his attention went by turns and spasms to problems of world government, socialism, and psychology. But these, alas, had little relevance to the work of the Center of Astronautical Projects. (Occasionally he approached General Thayer himself, with the request that his political findings be released; but the prudent General refused, sensing the



comfort that would be afforded to enemies of the nation to observe this once-unpolitical theoretician struggling with such bizarre notions. Thus, nothing came of the further speculations of Professor Ruggiero.)

Very likely the General was in the right; little time remained. If man could move backward in time, the secret would not remain with the Americans for long. If they were the first to effect it, so much the better; the mere capacity to do so was sufficient to deter the Russians from attempting to follow suit. Speed and secrecy were all. The implications of the principle of infratemporal mobility were—to put it mildly—light-years more far-reaching than those that had unlocked the secret of the atom. Obviously, if Americans could move backward in time, then history could be *selectively* altered in the national interest. If the Russians moved backward first, there was no telling what they might do. The irresponsibility of the Communist regime and Marxist ideology was already well enough known; why should men who had thus far shown no respect for history restrain themselves from altering it? Having rewritten history, what was now to prevent them from remaking it? It was this stunning speculation that sent General Thayer to the White House even while Ruggiero and Parkinson were recovering from the taxing diversions of Santa Fe.

The time-machine was by this time a technical matter; the consequences of its use a far more serious one. In the early spring of 1967, following the development of the first primitive experimental model, there were warnings enough of the possible consequences of use. At the Desert Springs Conference of Historiographical Manipulation, attended by a carefully selected group of Harvard and Berkeley historians, the matter was broached as calmly and fully as men can broach the fantastic. The selective manipulation of history dwarfed even the decision to use nuclear weapons in the Second World War: tampering with history was dangerous precisely because of the inability of the agents themselves to judge the infinite ramifications of even the slightest change. Human society, at the present moment, lived in the *present*; to tamper with its past would risk its alteration in ways which no one could, with any certitude, predict. To

spare a flea on a Pharaoh's nose from his historical fate, as Professor Woodbridge pointed out, might have shattering contemporary consequences—not to mention the difficulties involved in carrying out the assignment. And if this were so, what of the risks in more ambitious undertakings—such as the proposal to retroactively assassinate Pryvushkin, the gifted Soviet nuclear physicist (playfully suggested by the representative of the Central Intelligence Agency, which long ago had overlooked the utility of such a move, to its great regret).

By the end of the conference the matter had, of course, gone beyond the purview of the Berkeley-Harvard pilot group. Disturbed by the very purpose for which they had been summoned, a few of the redoubtables joined together in the Desert Springs Manifesto, calling upon their colleagues to dissociate themselves from this ghastly enterprise. But more thoughtful scholars reflected that it was not so simple: no one could seriously believe that the American government, once possessed of such a horrendous weapon, would use it, pondering as it would the grave and unpredictable consequences. The very fact that it would soon become known to the enemy was enough to sober the most obtuse historian. As Professor Czernovich put it, did one really want to live in a world refashioned by Marxist historiography? What an opportunity for them to reconstellate the history of the modern world, accommodating it to Marx's predictions; what irony that the work of two Free-World scientists might, by default, provide doctrinaire Soviet historiographical slaves with the opportunity to *force* a plastic history into the mould which Marx had so crudely and amateurishly fashioned. To be sure, some of the present historiographers argued that even Soviet historians dared not be quite so doctrinaire. Would they risk the same possibility—upheaval of their own present way of life—so that Marx's prophesy could be properly fulfilled? No one could be perfectly sure. As Professor Schlesinger pointed out, some Soviet historians doubtless were already preparing the assassination of President Franklin D. Roosevelt in Florida in early 1933—so that the “historically necessary” contradictions of capitalism would emerge in the administration of President John Nance Garner. What a tragic and wanton act, to make Garner an

American Kerensky by the redirected bullet of an anarchist assassin! (Not to mention the loss to subsequent historians should the New Deal never have occurred.) What would dissuade the Russians from such reckless deeds? Only prior possession of the weapon by the Americans themselves.

The latter viewpoint understandably prevailed; within a matter of months, the American historical profession—long in a slough of disrepute among the social sciences—had quite obviously recovered the majesty and prestige it had once possessed, before the more exact behavioral sciences had captured a certain remarkable stature with the crises of their times. At the University of California in Berkeley, for instance, the demand for the services of historians in Project Selective Redirection ("Operation Herodotus") was so great that the atomic radiation laboratory buildings were quietly emptied of natural scientists to make room for the new scholar-warriors in the secrecy which their work so impressively required.

So, from these beginnings emerged the theory of preemptive historical revisionism. At first, there were grumblings and protests within the President's secret Historical Advisory Commission, not to mention sharp and furious outbursts between the two inevitably rival groups of historians forming out of this turn of events, each group seeking the ear of the President and his National Security Council. "Operation Herodotus" was a far more problematical crash program of national defense than any previously undertaken; and the dizzy speed with which it commenced gave the debates of historians a certain liveliness unknown to meetings of the American Historical Association. On the one hand, a faction led by Professor Robinson advanced the not-implausible proposition that tampering with history was even more dangerous than tampering with matter; it was a fission process which could not even be tested without the gravest risk to all concerned. The more effective the weapon to be used against the enemy, the more extensive could be its damage to the nation. The most exquisitely controlled test could not fail to be perceived by the enemy himself, who would draw from it the most sinister conclusions, and possibly embark upon even more

imprudent experimentation himself. The time had come, Robinson declared, to simply give up such senseless enterprises. He proposed extensive historical controls to harness this terrible power for peaceful uses and to enable all men to share in the secrets disclosed by Rugiero and Parkinson. To the Four Freedoms, Robinson continued, should be added a fifth: Freedom of Time. If the President of the United States should offer the nations of the world the right to share this truly marvelous dimension of experience, think what such an unprecedented act of generosity would mean for American prestige. But history-meddling should be prohibited by international convention as a wanton infringement of the rights of men and nations.

Robinson's view might have carried greater weight if less had been known of the frantic enterprise already under way in the enemy camp. Not least alarming was the intelligence provided by the C.I.A., that both major universities in the Soviet Union—Moscow and Leningrad—had suddenly been stripped of their historical faculties not a month before. As Professor Taylor pointed out, what made this particularly upsetting was that for years the Soviet historian had chafed under an ignominy even less tolerable than that of his American counterpart. Among reputable Soviet scholars and scientists, history had long been discredited (by a sort of academics' agreement) as a pseudoscience. The predictive presumptions and crude expediency of Marxist historical theory was a matter for heartless mockery among Soviet scholars—a quackery which had survived only because of its servile utility to the Soviet state. What a humiliating reputation for a distinguished profession. And now, what a temptation to *hybris*; what an opportunity, at last, to do business! Soviet historiography would leap at the opportunity to simultaneously recover its respectability and elevate itself to a genuine power! Indeed, if there were among Soviet historians any who raised moral or prudential objections similar to those raised by Professor Robinson, the result was scarcely a matter for conjecture. Recall the fate of countless Russian scholars, simply erased from the academic world for lesser deviations. The American position should be clear: develop this terrible instrument at all costs—so that it would not have to be used! This course

proved beyond criticism. It was good to have an historical scholar-statesman in the White House.

## II

For historian T. H. O'Brien (B.A., Stanford, M.A., Oxon.) the mission to assassinate V. I. Lenin (if desperate circumstances required this preëemptive act) began as a great adventure. It quickly became tedium, unrelieved boredom. An extraordinary opportunity to be one of the first observer-participants in history quickly degenerated into the duties of a night-watchman in an interminable night. Suspended as he was in an infinitesimal slice of time, outside the exit of a tunnel near the Swiss-German frontier (through which, when he was ordered to click the switches on his instrument panel, would inexorably emerge the sealed train bearing Lenin through wartime Germany to his otherwise inevitable destination—St. Petersburg and revolution), O'Brien had ample time to contemplate his wretched situation. Outside his comfortably furnished time-machine (designed by Henry Dreyfus), lay the motionless landscape of a Bavarian forest, dimly lit by a late-winter moon. Shortly after his arrival, O'Brien had perceived, with some annoyance, the most curious feature of this panorama: a night-owl frozen in flight like an unresolved seventh chord, its talons reaching stiffly for the branch of a nearby pine tree: living taxidermy, which a mere (if not yet bidden) gesture of O'Brien's fingers on a switch could liberate into motion. He was reminded of the words of Goethe (for O'Brien was, or had been, something of a Germanist):

*Über allen Gipfeln  
Ist Ruh,  
In allen Wipfeln  
Spürest du  
Kaum einen Hauch;  
Die Vögelein schweigen im Walde.  
Warte nur, balde  
Ruhest du auch.*

What irony. Sleep, the balm of boredom and of care, sleep was a pleasure forbidden him for—how long?

O'Brien's mission had seemed to the young scholar at first a heaven-sent opportunity to visit the Germany of World War I—to touch the dead past and to make it live. But this particular part of the past in which, by command, he was required to stand sentinel was as confined and dull

as had been the winter woods outside his boyhood home in Wisconsin. Scattered through other parts of history were other sentinels, agents of the deterrent power of the West; perhaps they, too, had discovered how dull it all was. Perhaps, he reflected ruefully, observing the wintry desolation in that dark blue night, all of history was really as mundane as this: waiting for the Event to happen. But this, surely, was worse; this particular event, into which he was instructed to intrude as a *deus ex America*, might never happen at all—or so he had been told. He had been carefully trained, of course, to *make* it happen; but like that of the now obsolete Polaris commanders, his own readiness to act, to pose a credible threat to the enemy, was part of the price he must pay so that the event would be *less likely* to occur. No sleep, continuous vigilance, the long wait for the distant signal from the "future"—a signal which he could not disobey—all these were part of that price. Inside the railway tunnel, aboard the motionless train, slept V. I. Lenin, the revolutionary pamphleteer, whose career was to be brutally interrupted if that signal came. ("The removal of Lenin from history," so read the N.S.C. action paper, "would be a massive preëemptive act, not without calculated risks, inviting possible retaliation from Soviet military authorities and risking, as well, certain unpredictable socio-economic derangements of the American economy and military system. Nevertheless, his removal from history—if rendered necessary by hostile Soviet acts—would most likely conduce to the triumph of the liberal representative governmental institutions of the Kerensky Provisional Government, and to the spread of liberal democracy to other parts of Eastern Europe. To be sure, massive consequences and repercussions, requiring equally massive readjustments, are to be expected in American society as a result—but surely these would be less destructive than the risks of a hydrogen attack. Probably, they would be enormously favorable. In any event, peaceful revisionary retaliation is preferable to nuclear holocaust or to destruction, and is thus in the national interest of the United States. Should this act be required and prove successful, others could doubtless be undertaken later.")

Time was quite difficult to measure under such curious circumstances. During a very consider-



able stretch of it, Histronaut O'Brien nourished his flagging spirits with tape-recorded contemporary music, lectures, and comforting noises from home. Snow heaped his view-window. Then, with brutal suddenness, the grave signals began. There could be no mistaking them—weeks of training in fail-safe devices had taught him instantaneous obedience in unflinching sequence: the familiar flashing green light, then the profound electric shock, then the recorded command. One rapidly followed another. O'Brien was thrust, in extraordinary surprise, from his comfortable foam seat. Without delay or reflection, he seized the time-resumption switch and pulled it. (Somewhere, hidden before or behind him in history, his enemy counterpart might be doing likewise.)

Outside, the owl's talons finally grasped the branch, and, in doing so, let loose a spray of fine winter snow; a slight motion of branches responded to a sudden, gentle wind. Everything else was still. O'Brien lowered the time-machine to the ground, and unleashed its hermetic door lock. Clad in his German officer's uniform—a necessary deception—he sprang out onto the cold forest snow, pistol and detonating equipment in hand, and crunched his way toward the tunnel exit. Hastily laying the explosive carbon on the track, he ran clumsily back to his machine, electric gear in hand, unrolling the wires as he went. Scarcely a minute had passed; quickly, he locked the door tight, grasped the detonating switch, and returned to his seat. Then, from within the tunnel, came the expected muffled whistle, the widening light, and the mounting roar of the train . . .

In the winter twilight of a December day in 1968, Histronaut T. H. O'Brien approached Washington, D. C., in his machine, his first mission an arduous but successful one. Below him stretched a vast dull panorama: the lights of homes, office buildings, streets. Crossing the main part of town, he passed the Washington Monument and hovered briefly over the Potomac in search of the Pentagon landing field. The visibility was poor in the dim light of a snowy evening, and somehow he failed to see the field-lights and signals. Familiar landmarks were obscured on the far side of the river. He had never been very adept at aerial navigation, even under the

best of circumstances, and these were assuredly the worst. The storm had evidently been in progress for some time, or so he thought, for even the Pentagon itself was obscured. There came over him the sense of annoyance which comes to men who are prevented by some unexpected trivial obstacle from the completion of a triumphal enterprise. His machine was sufficiently mobile to land, helicopter-like, in places of its own choosing; so, frustrated by poor visibility, he turned back in a slow arc towards the gleaming lights of the central city, which shone bleakly through the gusts of wet snow, to land on the White House lawn.

The sight was puzzling at first; while he had only the vaguest sense of how much time had elapsed since his departure (it was certainly less than a year)—yet as he dropped his machine carefully on the lower grounds of the White House lawn, he was struck by the change that had come over things in his absence. The light snow could hardly obscure the tangle of brown weeds and undergrowth which lay all about his machine: what a curious laxity of the gardeners, to neglect so much! The grounds were remarkably deteriorated. He opened the door of the machine, stepped lightly out among the brambles, and, still in his German officer's uniform, made his way quickly up the overgrown lawn to the White House. From out of the darkness emerged the expected sentinel to challenge him. "*Halt! Wer da?*" came the peremptory voice. As O'Brien approached him in surprise, the sentinel, clad in field-gray, lowered his rifle. "*Zu Befehl, Herr Major!*" he exclaimed deferentially, peering narrowly at O'Brien and his feigned insignia of rank. "You should not be outside like this after dark. The Gouverneur-General, you know, has given strictest orders for all personnel to be in their quarters after curfew. What luck! I might have shot you by mistake for an American!"

Paul Seabury received the Ph.D. from Columbia University in 1953, and is an associate professor of political science at the University of California in Berkeley. He is the author of *The Wilhelmstrasse*, and is at work on a book about American social attitudes and foreign policy.



# Zomeravondkamermuziek

## A Dutch Idyll

"Poetry is not personal."—WALLACE STEVENS

And yet, Mijnheer, so many poets are;  
An American poet in Holland  
Sans cigarettes, sans crew-cut, sans blue-jeans,  
Sans camera, a Dutchman's Englishman,  
Promises to translate "Havelock the Dane,"  
To read "The Fortunes of Nigel," "Old Mortality,"  
But he does not; the weather is too fickle,  
Being rainy, sunny, warm, cool, windy and still  
All together. He cannot sustain a novel,  
A metrical romance, or even a real one.

He cannot be rid of his body. He must shave,  
Shower, eat, go to the toilet, make love;  
No matter how often he gives his body away  
It is there in the morning crying hungrily  
For more, more (like a pampered child)  
Gluttonous for tangible knowledge.  
Perhaps it is the perfect soul that dies  
Perfectly, while the imperfect body  
Lives on, compounding imperfections:  
His lisp, his left-handedness, his limp.

At dawn, in the freckled glade of beech  
Trapping the sun, what does he believe?  
And in the fields where the windmills  
Do not turn (he does not even imagine  
Them turning) what does he believe?  
On the morning hike, the witty guide says,  
Coming upon the herb, thyme is money.  
He does not say what time is;  
Shrewdly he stays within his limits  
Guarding a lesser kind of wisdom.

When he swims of an afternoon in the North Sea  
Is the soul imminent, emanant, eminent,  
For an instant? Is the world truly  
An inconsiderable speck in the soul's garden?  
At the summer evening chamber music concerts  
In the Black Barn, hearing the Goldberg Variations,  
Does the soul revive, singing louder than the clavier?  
Than rain? Than his itchy nose? Than tobacco?  
When the soprano sings "*Ich bin herrlich, ich bin schön*,"  
Is it true? He wonders if Bach wondered, or knew.

In winter he teaches what he was taught;  
In summer he hopes to learn what he has learned.

by PHILIP MURRAY

*Philip Murray holds a Master's degree from Columbia University. Three of his poems, under the general title, "Heroes and Books," appeared in the Spring 1960 issue of the FORUM. He is an instructor in English at Hofstra College.*

by REINHOLD NIEBUHR

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## REFLECTIONS ON DEMOCRACY AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO COMMUNISM

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Can the 'Free World' hope for the evolution of democracy in any—even some—of the newer and poorer nations? To answer, one of the most lucid and learned minds of our time draws upon history as well as the news that we know.

We all know that the world is divided between the Communist bloc of nations and those who define themselves as members of the "Free World." For the "Free World," democracy is the normative concept of government. But democracy is not an easily attainable form of government. As more and more nations achieve independence, and at all stages of cultural and economic development, the question arises whether we of the "Free World" have not regarded democracy as too simply and generally an alternative to Communism in all nations and cultures. Democratic self-government is indeed an ultimate ideal of political community. But it is of the greatest importance that we realize that the resources for its effective functioning are not available to many nations.

It is our common assumption that political freedom is a simple *summum bonum*. It is not. Freedom must always be related to community and justice. Every community seeks consciously or unconsciously to make social peace and order the first goal of its life. It may pay a very high price in the restriction of freedom so as to establish order; but order is the first desideratum for

the simple reason that chaos means non-existence. The situation in the Congo should persuade us of this obvious fact, if we had not been aware of it before.

Order alone can, of course, be bought at a very high price, usually at too high a price from the standpoint of those classes in society who must pay it. The second goal of any society therefore is justice. Aristotle defined justice as "giving each man his due." Since in the long history of Western democracy no one has ever offered accurate criteria by which each man's due is measured, we must come to the conclusion that open societies have solved the problem by allowing a free competition of social forces, which enables every force in society to make its claims upon society and to acquire enough social and political power and prestige to enforce its claims.

And liberty and equality are generally recognized as the twin principles of justice. But abstract radical libertarianism and equalitarianism falsely regard them as simple historical possibilities. They cannot be simple possibilities. Liberty must be measured against the community's need for security against internal and external peril. Equality must be measured against the need for the hierarchy of social function by which a community integrates its life and work. That is why history has refuted both Jacobin libertarianism and Marxist equalitarianism.

Democracy itself did not emerge in Europe until the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. And it did not come to terms with the necessities of justice in industrial collectivism until the end of the nineteenth century. This tardiness was in fact the reason for the Communist rebellion against bourgeois civilization. I think we may understand more fully why it is wrong in the present hour to present democracy as a simple alternative to Communism if we reflect upon this history, attempting to answer two questions. 1) Why did free institutions emerge in European culture so very late? And 2) Why was Europe tardy in establishing justice within the conditions of an industrial economy?

## I

Democratic institutions emerged late for two primary reasons. High standards of literacy are required to prepare all classes to participate in

the dialogue about justice, and particularly to enable the "lower classes" to make their claims and make them effective. The non-democratic European nations of our own day still lack this standard of literacy; we know that the "poor world" has not attained even the minimal standard. John Scott, in his significant book *Democracy Is Not Enough*, offers a literacy table which demonstrates this lack of an elementary prerequisite of democratic government among many of the new nations—the very nations upon whom we have wished an ultimate ideal as though it were a simple possibility. If democracy derives political authority from the "consent of the governed," the governed must have at least minimal competence in judging the performance of their governors and in estimating their own place in the political organization.

But it is even more important to recall that the emergence of democracy in European culture depended on the development of forms of ethnic and linguistic homogeneity; on these depend communal cohesion. If these forms of the sense of kind and these instruments of communication are lacking, no free government can either create them or live without their influence for order.

Most of the European nations achieved linguistic homogeneity through the translation of the Bible into one of the many vernaculars; the printed language became the normative language in triumph over the dialects, which are transmitted by oral traditions. (Linguistic unity was not in itself sufficient to guarantee the integral unity of the German and Italian nations, but that is another story.) Among the nations of European culture, only three have achieved both integral community and democracy under conditions of linguistic diversity: Switzerland, Belgium, and Canada.

Now Switzerland is the classic example of the triumph of democratic community over linguistic and ethnic diversity. Its sense of community despite these diversities is an achievement which has its roots in the Medieval contest with the Hapsburg monarchy. Belgium, for its part, has achieved a remarkable degree of democratic stability despite the basic ethnic and linguistic division between the Flemish and Walloon populations, the latter French-speaking; yet surely her difficulties since the Congo crisis were aggravated by linguistic and ethnic division. Last-

ly, the integrity of Canada stood in great danger just because the Province of Quebec was differentiated from the rest of Canada by language and religion. Only the conquest of the West and Northwest has served to bridge the original chasm by dispersing a too-localized ethnic and linguistic minority.

And the matter of language brings us to the matter of race. Language is an historical achievement and therefore malleable; race is a biological fact. The unity of England and Scotland preceded the rise of democracy and the foundation for the unity of these hostile nations on the same island was laid by the irrational accidents of dynasty. James III of Scotland became James I of Britain because he had some of the royal blood in his veins. Thus it was possible to transfer the monarchy from the Tudors, the instruments of English nationalism, whose line died out with Queen Elizabeth, to the Scottish Stuart line. There are still subsidiary languages in Scotland, Cornwall, and Wales, but they are not a serious challenge to the dominant English language.

Now if one surveys the non-European nations today, particularly the democratic ones, one must be struck by the ethnic and linguistic, rather than racial, hazards to national unity which most of them face. The language riots in India in 1956 prove that a sense of common race will not do when there is a linguistic conflict in which no language may prevail. Even Gandhi's immense authority was not able to establish Hindi as the dominant language in India, though it became the official one. English, the language of the former imperial masters, was, until recently, the common language of the Indian bureaucracy, but modern education in various tongues is threatening the efficiency of the whole Indian political apparatus.

And many of the other Asian nations have comparable difficulties with the ethnic and linguistic bases of integral community. On a much lower level of culture, the forming nations of Africa demonstrate daily that so-called "African nationalism" is really a "pan-African" revolt of the black races against their former masters. There are not enough resources of literacy and communication-through-print to establish linguistic community. The confusion of

dialects and tribal loyalties, of which the situation in the Congo is a vivid example rather than a unique phenomenon, makes clear that it is the pan-African sentiment of black men, together with sub-national tribal loyalties, that are at work here, stronger than the cohesive forces of nationalism. Free institutions can, in the words of the preamble of the American constitution, "establish a more perfect union." But they must presuppose some other kind of union, some force of loyalty below conscious political contrivance.

Consider the situation in Ghana. The rather less than ideal democracy over which Nkrumah presides may be defective in democratic liberties because of the boundless egotism of the young African leader, drunk with the heady wine of political authority. But there is also the possibility that national unity was out of reach altogether unless rigorous and not quite democratic measures were taken to subordinate the powerful Ashanti tribe of the hinterland, proud of its ancient royal house, to the integrity of the new nation, whose parliamentary institutions were formed in the more sophisticated culture of the urbanized former Gold Coast.

Two other passions further complicate the achievement of integral community below the level of conscious political contrivance. One is regional loyalty, which may coincide with tribal loyalty—and may not. In the Congo, the separatism of Katanga province is prompted not only by tribal considerations but also by a mining economy which is loath either to share its wealth with, or risk its order in, the chaos of the rest of the nation.

Turning next to Asia, we see that Indonesia, in addition to its other difficulties, must contend with the regionalism of the two large islands of Sumatra and Java, one richer and the other more populous. Democratic institutions can solve such regional tensions if the strains do not run too deep. But some of them run very deep indeed. Pakistan, one of the most loyal members of the "Free World," is functioning under a popular and seemingly beneficent military dictatorship because the parliamentary regime was unable to mitigate the regionalism of a nation divided into two regions a thousand miles apart. The previous democratic regime was, incidentally, involved in corruption, a defect which is a reminder that minimal standards of honesty are



prerequisites of a healthy democratic regime.

Lastly, if ethnic and linguistic homogeneity are prerequisites for community below the level of conscious political contrivance, then tolerance amid a diversity of religions and cultures would seem to be also. Habits of tolerance between different religious communities—which political freedom may encourage but cannot create—are necessary to make given cultural diversity compatible with national stability. But since it required at least two centuries to persuade the two warring versions of Christianity to live in a tolerably peaceful co-existence, one has some apprehensions about the ability of non-European nations, democratic or not, to establish political unity against the hazard of religious division. The former imperial India is now two nations rather than one because even Gandhi could not bridge the gulf between Hinduism and Islam. Among the new nations, Indonesia in Asia and many of the new African nations (particularly Nigeria), have diverse cultures, containing Islamic, Christian, and primitive religious elements. Our recent Presidential campaign, which certainly did not threaten the unity of this nation, was nevertheless a reminder of the virulence which religious passion may reach even in a highly cultured nation.

To sum up: many of the nations to whom we commend democracy quite obviously do not have the prerequisites of national unity which were fashioned in Europe before the rise of free governments. They therefore confront a hazard of greater dimension than any of the free European nations faced. Recall that political absolutism was more securely fastened on the French nation by the political philosophy of the very enlightened humanist, Jean Bodin, because he felt compelled to use royal power to overcome the internecine strife of the Catholics and the Huguenots. Such are the uses of governmental absolutism and the possible threats of religious difference.

## II

To glimpse the vast difficulty of establishing democracy, it is even more important to consider our second question, to attempt to recount the reasons why the European democracy was so

tardy in coming to terms with problems of justice in an industrial society. To begin with, let us agree that modern industrial cultures do not have the simple two-class social structure of bourgeoisie and proletariat which the Communist dogma affirms. They have a complex pattern of class interests. They have not, in fact, been able to achieve health without establishing a tolerable equilibrium of power between at least four classes: the class of landed wealth, the middle class of commercial and industrial owners, the industrial workers, and the men of the soil. Or more exactly, since landed wealth has been either liquidated in the rise of democracy (as it was in France) or has been non-existent (as in the new nations of America and the British Commonwealth) or has been gradually merged with the new commercial classes (as in Britain), modern free governments have had to achieve some kind of tolerable equilibrium of power among the three remaining classes. Of these, the men of the soil, whether Asian peasants or European yeomen or American and Canadian farmers, appear to be the stuff of history rather than the creators of historical dynamic. They may become the prey of Fascist movements or, as in the Russian case, they may become the instruments of revolutionary politics. But they are not capable of initiating a dynamic political policy on their own accord. In revolutionary France, the peasants' traditional loyalty to the *ancien régime* was one half of their ambivalence in relation to the revolution. This ambivalence prevented a consistent revolutionary policy by the new governments of Assembly and Convention. It was their patriotism that Napoleon exploited.

Only two, then, of the four classes of Western history, the bourgeoisie and the industrial workers, have been politically dynamic. (If, by the way, there is a separate class of professional and intellectual leaders, it is usually related to one of these two dynamic classes.) The Communist dogma pictures them as the protagonists of two contradictory forces which are marching toward the Armageddon of history. Their roles in the history of Western democracy have in fact been somewhat more complex. They were partially hostile forces and partially allies in destroying the mold of traditional feudal, monarchical society. Undoubtedly the middle classes, pictured by the Communist dogma as the devils

of history, were the primary agents of rebellion. They could find no place in the traditional feudal-agrarian order for their new and more flexible and dynamic forms of property, and they were conscious of the significance of their own competence and initiative, which was not adequately recognized by political regimes dominated by landed wealth.

It was in the Middle Ages, long before the rise of modern democracies, that the "bourgeoisie", the "bürgers" (so named because they took up their residence in the environs of the castle or "burg" for military protection) organized protests and rebellions against the lord of the castle to secure a city charter in which their basic rights were recognized and secured. Thus the basic democratic principle, as the intellectual allies of the businessmen finally formulated it in seventeenth-century England and eighteenth-century France, that the authority of government rests upon "the consent of the governed," gestated for a long time before its birth.

Understandably enough, the industrial workers, initially the craftsmen, were allies of the commercial classes in the urban communities which finally destroyed the static feudal hierarchy of political authority. Throughout the history of democratic societies, these industrial workers pressed closely upon the heels of the businessmen in making their claims of justice upon the community. And conversely, the commercial classes, who finally became the owners of the expanding industries, were inadvertent allies of the industrial proletariat in the sense that the right of the franchise, the basis of all democratic governments, could not be claimed by the middle classes without setting in motion political forces which finally gave the right to vote to all classes. Thus was established an essential equality of political power, the final instrument for mitigating the inequalities of economic power which were inherent in the very structure of industrial enterprise.

Only in the United States were there no property limitations on suffrage in the Constitution. In England, the spread of this essentially equalizing power, this pass to justice, had a more tortuous history. In Cromwell's revolution, the constitutional convention of the army convened at Putney rejected the idea of universal suffrage proposed by the radicals such as Wildman and

Rainsboro and made suffrage dependent upon the possession of property, as proposed by the army command, Cromwell, Ireton, and Fairfax. Universal suffrage was gradually established in Britain beginning with the Reform Act of 1832 and ending with the granting of the right to vote to agricultural laborers in the Act of 1885. The right of the franchise, which was destined to refute the Communist charge that bourgeois democracy was nothing but the "executive committee of the owning classes," was indeed established partly to serve the interests of the owning classes; but it was extended, by political forces beyond their control, to give political power to the class which was pressing on their heels as democracy and industrialization progressed.

The slow diffusion of the right of suffrage, then, had much to do with the tardiness of European democracy in establishing justice in the contest of forces in an essentially collectivist technical society. Yet more important, and more laggard, was the decline of the individualistic approach to collective problems, the inheritance of traditional bourgeois democracy. The classical expression of this individualism was embodied in Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, published, significantly, in 1776, and therefore contemporaneous with both the French and American revolutions. Smith, the founder of classical economics, thought that the free market would guarantee justice by the automatic balances which the law of supply and demand would create. The price of labor, as well as the price of commodities, would in Smith's theory be justly determined by the free market. The obvious defect of the theory of *laissez faire* was that the individual laborer, with his family obligations and his lack of mobility in seeking employment, did not have equal bargaining power with the owners of ever more centralized industry.

The whole of the nineteenth century (and in the United States the period ending in 1932) was required to correct this defect in the theory of bourgeois democracy, to grant the industrial worker the right to organize and bargain collectively, and to create the equilibrium of power which is the basis of justice in any society.

In timing the tardiness with which democracy came to terms with the necessities of justice

in an industrial society and in tracing the forces and tendencies, deliberate or not, which made this possible, it is apparent that two political conditions were and are necessary. One is that the middle classes be strong and resolute enough either to break the mold of the traditional society dominated by landed wealth, or, as in Britain, to transform the old feudalism so that it would be compatible with the necessities of a commercial and industrial economy. The second condition is that the grant of new liberties and rights to the industrial workers should not be, though inevitably tardy and reluctant, so tardy as to prompt them to rebellion against the standards of democratic society themselves; they should rather be persuaded to participate in the pressures and counter-pressures of an open society; step by step, they may gradually achieve the rights they desire and which the stability of the community requires. When these two conditions have not obtained in European history, democratic governments have not achieved health and maturity. Nor has democratic government been a success in non-European cultures without them.

It is the fact that Germany did not achieve a stable democratic government until after the Second World War. She had a technically efficient middle class in the nineteenth century, but the commercial and industrial owners had no political sense of direction and no prestige of their own. They were the junior partners of the landed aristocrats, whose military prowess and bureaucratic efficiency gave them a prestige in the nation which prevented a radical transformation of traditional monarchical and feudal society. The German parliament only slightly circumscribed the power of an essentially absolute monarch. The monarch controlled the aristocratic military establishment, whose prestige derived from having unified the divided nation under the house of Hohenzollern. When its aggression finally brought on the First World War and Germany's defeat, the Weimar Republic, led by the highly liberalized German working class, failed to accomplish *three necessary steps for creating a viable democracy*. It accomplished no rigorous reform of land tenure; it did not bring the power of the military under civil control; and it did nothing to create a safe equilibrium between the organized forces of

management and labor. It was content to have elected a workingman to the awesome eminence of the seat once held by the Kaiser.

The tragic fate of the Weimar Republic, buffeted by a world depression, charged with the defeat of the army by a people unable to accept the fact that its military glory had turned to ashes, and finally done to death by the fanatical Nazi movement, is well known. Only after two military defeats has Germany been able both to break the power of the military aristocracy and to create an industrial society in which the industrial worker could fully participate in forming the standards of justice which culminated in the securities of a modern welfare state. In short, the tortuous road to democratic health taken by one of Europe's most gifted nations should memorialize the obvious fact that the prerequisites for a free society may be beyond the reach of many nations, European or not.

The absence of a strong middle class and of a deliberate procedure for granting new rights to industrial workers also accounts for the initial failure of democracy in Japan. In Japan (the earliest non-European industrial nation), as in Germany, industry developed under the control of a landed aristocracy renowned for its military prowess and willing to co-opt the industrial efficiency of the new working class and promise it the incidental profits of its expanding military empire. Again as in Germany, parliamentary institutions only slightly qualified the power of a military living under the prestige of the imperial house. Defeat in the Second World War and a consequent occupation brought both necessary land reform and the strengthening of Japan's parliamentary institutions. And the right of the industrial workers to organize was granted, setting collective power against collective power.

We know, then, despite polemical slogans about the "Free World," that not all the nations which early aspired to democracy have succeeded, brilliantly or otherwise, in relating free institutions to the necessities of justice in an industrial society. The causes of their failure may have been many, but they always included two: a lack of resolution or political aptitude in the middle class to break the dominance of landed wealth; and an incapacity or unwillingness to include the other dynamic class, the workingmen, among the



forces whose competitions establish the flexible equilibrium basic to democratic justice.

Let us return to the present, to the new nations and the poor nations and their prospects. Consider the rather obvious failure of democracy in Latin America, where a litter of democratic constitutions has not prevented a long history of alternation between democracy and dictatorship of the right or left. Perhaps this failure, this feebleness of the democratic impulse, is best explained by the weakness of the two classes we have discussed and their inability to break the mold of a feudal-agrarian economy, even with the force of new industrial wealth. Mexico alone has a half-century of democratic stability under a one-party government, a government which does not suppress civil rights and tries with fair success to be loyal to the ideals of the revolution which overthrew the vexatious Díaz dictatorship. New industrial vitalities have gradually transmuted the form of society which an idealistic landowner, Madero, initiated in breaking the mold of the old feudal culture.

Two of the great Latin American nations, Argentina and Brazil, have recently overthrown dictatorships in which military force capitalized upon unrest among workers and peasants whose democratic governments were dominated by landed wealth. Venezuela, on the other hand, now has an uneasy democratic regime after overthrowing a military dictatorship which represented a corruption of an earlier army junta regime designed to correct the abuses of another democratic government. Venezuela's new democracy is under attack from a Castro-inspired revolutionary movement, which would have little prospect of success if there were not in Venezuela, as in other Latin American nations, classes in such poverty that they have lost confidence in the slow democratic process.

In sum, if Latin American nations fall prey to dictatorship, they can only be rescued by revolution. As in Cuba, the revolution may establish a dictatorship of the left. And the basic program of leftist revolutions is almost always land reform. In the case of Cuba, Marxist radicalism and much resentment against American owners of property have prompted a complete nationalization of property, leaving the middle class supporters of the radical revolution with new re-

sentments which may well generate a new revolution. The various classes of the nation are at such a social and economic distance from one another that the flexible adjustments of interests and subtle accommodations of rights which democracy requires become quite impossible.

But the prospects for democracy in Latin America, while dim, are more promising than in many nations of Asia and the Middle East. Egypt is of course under the domination of a military junta. It overturned the traditional monarchical society and promised, but is not likely to establish, a democratic regime in the near future. The poverty and illiteracy of the Egyptian *fellahin* and the irresponsibility of the political parties in the previous semi-democratic regime should offer the gravest doubts to democrats. The intellectuals, motivated by patriotic and other passions for social justice, find no effective middle class with which to become allied. They naturally drift to the army, the obvious center of power.

In Indonesia and in Iraq, a quasi-democratic regime functions with military power and Communist Party support in uneasy alliance. In Indonesia, the army seems momentarily to dominate. It is hazardous to make any predictions about the future of political institutions or of democratic prospects in such nations as Iran, where a comparatively enlightened monarchy tries to accomplish at least minimal land reform. But it is not hazardous to be wholly pessimistic about the prospects of nations such as Saudi Arabia; here oil wealth drawn from Western markets accentuates rather than mitigates the fantastic contrast between the profligate royal house and the abjectly poor peasants and the Bedouins of the desert kingdom.

### III

Yet we need not despair. Surveying the difficulties which the democratic cause faced in Europe — before it triumphed — and surveying similar hazards which it faces in some non-European cultures—which make any imminent or even ultimate triumph of democratic government unlikely — should not prompt us to pessimistic conclusions, either about the *validity* of the common cause of the "Free World" in its contest with Communism or about the possibility



of the ultimate triumph of free institutions in this particular contest. It should rather persuade us to reassess the stakes of the struggle.

Such a reassessment must convince us that what we define as "dictatorship" or "despotism" is only a product or by-product of a more serious source of evil in Communism. That evil is a pretentious scheme of world salvation, a secularized religious apocalypse, which foolishly divides the world between good and evil classes and nations, predicts the final triumph of the hosts of justice against those of injustice, and destines one class, the "proletariat," to become the masters of the whole historic process, by taking "the leap from the realm of necessity to the realm of freedom."

If this absurd religious apocalypse should ever be implemented on a large scale, and should master the destinies of all the nations, mankind would face not only totalitarian government but a dangerous effort to press all the vitalities and forces, the hopes and aspirations of many nations, the cultural and ethical aspirations of sensitive individuals, into the restrictive and confining pattern of its scheme of world salvation. The Communist danger is, in short, much more grievous and perilous than we assume it to be if we define it simply as despotism.

On the other hand, we lay the basis for political embarrassment, and possibly despair, if we define our cause merely as the cause of democratic self-government. Our cause is the cause of freedom in a wider sense than that of democratic political institutions. We believe that history is a vast drama or series of dramas, in which individuals, communities, classes, races and cultures are engaged in winning their freedom from the limits and necessities of nature, even in exploiting and misusing their freedom in contest with other individuals and communities, in elaborating theme upon theme and dramatic configuration upon configuration. It is difficult to comprehend the whole series of dramas in any pattern of meaning. It is quite certainly impossible to contain such varied themes in the simple morality play between good and evil in which the Marxist dogma seeks to confine it.

In this contest with the Communist effort to master peoples and direct history, it is necessary that the nations at the inner circle of direction

should have mastered both the philosophy of freedom and the art of self-government. But it is a part of the philosophy of freedom to have regard for the varied stages of culture of different communities, and therefore not to expect them to attain a form of community which is beyond their political or moral capacities. This does not mean that a form of community in which a monopoly of power guarantees order can ever be regarded as a citadel of justice. But it does mean that we will not be tempted to despair if, on the fringes of the non-Communist world, we should see some serious defects in the attainment of democratic justice. We cannot, in short, regard democratic self-government as a simply attainable alternative to Communist totalitarianism.

Dictatorships, military or otherwise may be uncreative. Some sorts of dictatorship may merely represent the failure of a nation to achieve order in any other way. These cannot be regarded with complacency. But they are not as irrevocable as a Communist dictatorship, which is but the product and instrument of a religio-political dogmatic system with a fantastic ambition to master all the variegated processes of history and press all its themes into one mold, and which promises redemption from all social evil.

Obviously no nation or culture could with honor capitulate before such an absurd religio-political thrust at world dominion. It must be resisted. On the other hand, its pretensions are in such obvious contradiction to the multiple facts in the landscape of the world that, despite its momentary plausibility, there is the possibility that, meeting resistance, it will disintegrate among those facts, as will the ideological system which is the source of its prestige. There is therefore no reason to seek the elimination of the evil at the heart of Communism by launching a nuclear war against it. This is particularly true since a nuclear war, beyond its tragic destruction of millions of lives, would create a political chaos which would postpone the refutation of Communism's ideological system and extend the illusion of its relevance. Nor can an ideological system which promises to transmute redemption from catastrophe be defeated by the greatest catastrophe of human history.

If this analysis of the contest should have any

validity, it might seem to imply that old support of complacency, the assurance that "time is on our side." Yet I believe that it is on our side in the very long run. In the short run, the anti-Communist forces must contend not only against the handicaps and hazards which we have previously analyzed. They must also deal with a handicap essential to an international alliance which has no simple unifying dogma as the Communists have. It cannot coerce the nations in the alliance, nor keep them from pursuing policies which express their distinctive traditions and reveal both their strength and their weakness.

The Anglo-Saxon hegemony in the Western alliance could, for instance, support de Gaulle in his effort to solve the complex Algerian crisis, dangerous as it is to the cause of the democratic world. But it could not possibly directly interfere in the French political situation. The common cause remains at the mercy of both the virtues and weaknesses of the great nations in the alliance. It is not even legitimate to interpret the common cause as a defense of "Western civilization," though many of the values at stake were matured in the West. The non-Communist nations, including the uncommitted ones like

India who do not wish to come under the Communist yoke, represent many cultures and stages of civilization.

The common cause which must be defended literally includes the whole of mankind and the right of all nations and peoples to develop their potentialities and fulfill their destinies without being restricted by the absurd pretension to omniscience of a single force in history, trying, vainly we hope, to secure the historical omnipotence which its pretended omniscience seems to warrant in its own esteem. Thus modern history has culminated in a dramatic encounter between dogma and common experience.



Reinhold Niebuhr, research associate at Columbia University's Institute of War and Peace Studies, is the author of innumerable books and articles, including *The Self and the Drama of History* and *The Irony of American History*. The present essay draws on his forthcoming book on international politics. Dr. Niebuhr is vice-president of Union Theological Seminary.

## *Footnote to the Writers' Conference Season*

... Indeed, few ... in the literary world would even have dared to face an audience. Algernon Swinburne never gave a lecture in his life, nor would he consent to do so on any terms. George Meredith doubted his ability to hold the attention of a group. And Thomas Hardy considered lecturing both out of his line and beyond his powers of endurance. (*IN HARD TIMES: REFORMERS AMONG THE LATE VICTORIANS*, by Herman Ausubel; Columbia University Press 1960.)

# TWO RUSSIAN POEMS

by ANNA AKHMATOVA

Translated by BABETTE DEUTSCH

Anna Akhmatova, pseudonym of Anna Andreyevna Gorenko, born 1888, is the author of many delicate and penetrating lyrics. Her first book was published in 1912. Between 1924 and 1940 she was silent, and for years was something of an internal emigré. In 1946 she was proscribed as a decadent and a possible corrupter of youth. After Stalin's death, poems of the intimate kind usual with her again appeared. A volume of her *Selected Poems* was published under a Moscow imprint in 1958, and a long unfinished poem: "An Epic Without a Hero", was printed in New York in 1960. The lyrics above were done into English verse from prose versions by Avrahm Yarmolinsky and will be included in his forthcoming *An Anthology of Russian Verse, 1812-1960*. The only poem from the cycle "The Secrets of the Trade" that we have seen is "Last Poem" (1959). The title should not be taken literally: Akhmatova has published other work since.—B. D.

## *"And This You Call Work"*

And this you call work—it's a carefree  
Existence! To catch, ere it's flown,  
What music has privately hinted,  
And jestingly call it my own.

And using another's blithe scherzo  
For lines far too languid to run,  
To swear your poor heart is lamenting  
In fields that smile back at the sun.

And later, when pinewoods play Trappist,  
To do what bold eavesdroppers dare,  
While the fog's impalpable curtain  
Hangs vaguely as smoke on the air.

Not feeling one qualm of conscience,  
I take things from left and right.  
Life is sly, but I take something from it,  
And *all* from the stillness of night.

## *Last Poem*

*from the cycle "THE SECRETS OF THE TRADE"*

by ANNA AKHMATOVA

*Translated by BABETTE DEUTSCH*

It is bounding with life and arrives with a roar  
Like a thunderclap startled; it bursts through  
the door,  
Throat shaken with laughter, it spins without  
pause,  
Declaring delight in boisterous applause.

Another, the child of the hush at midnight,  
Steals toward me from nowhere as if by some  
sleight;  
From a mirror not mine that nameless one gazes,  
And mutters harsh, half comprehensible phrases.

Then, too, there are some that will come in broad  
day,  
Ignoring me quite as if I were away,  
And across the white paper flow lightly, flow  
fully,  
As pure as a stream in an untrodden gully.

And here is a secret one, gliding around,  
No sound yet no color, nor color nor sound,  
It sharpens and shines, then eludes you; contrive  
To seize it, yet you will not take it alive.

But this! . . . It drank blood from my veins with  
less ruth  
Than love, cruel girl, showed me in my youth,  
And abruptly retreated into unbroken  
Silence, as though it never had spoken.

Here is the bitterest grief I have known:  
It left me, whose traces, this thing that has flown,  
Reached the brink of the uttermost bounds,  
well I know.  
Now it has gone, and I . . . I, too, must go.



# BECKETT BY THE MADELEINE

by TOM F. DRIVER

"The confusion is not my invention . . . The only chance of renovation is to open our eyes and see the mess. It is not a mess you can make sense of."  
—Samuel Beckett

Nothing like Godot, he arrived before the hour. His letter had suggested we meet at my hotel at noon on Sunday, and I came into the lobby as the clock struck twelve. He was waiting.

My wish to meet Samuel Beckett had been prompted by simple curiosity and interest in his work. American newspaper reviewers like to call his plays nihilistic. They find deep pessimism in them. Even so astute a commentator as Harold Clurman of *The Nation* has said that "Waiting for Godot" is "the concentrate . . . of the contemporary European . . . mood of despair." But to me Beckett's writing had seemed permeated with love for human beings and with a kind of

humor that I could reconcile neither with despair nor with nihilism. Could it be that my own eyes and ears had deceived me? Is his a literature of defeat, irrelevant to the social crises we face? Or is it relevant because it teaches us something useful to know about ourselves?

I knew that a conversation with the author would not settle such questions, because a man is not the same as his writing: in the last analysis, the questions had to be settled by the work itself. Nevertheless I was curious.

My curiosity was sharpened a day or two before the interview by a conversation I had with a well-informed teacher of literature, a Jesuit father, at a conference on religious drama near Paris. When Beckett's name came into the discussion, the priest grew loud and told me that Beckett "hates life." That, I thought, is at least one thing I can find out when we meet.

Beckett's appearance is rough-hewn Irish. The features of his face are distinct, but not fine. They look as if they had been sculptured with an unsharpened chisel. Unruly hair goes straight up from his forehead, standing so high that the top falls gently over, as if to show that it really is hair and not bristle. One might say it combines the man's own pride and humility. For he has the pride that comes of self-acceptance and the humility, perhaps of the same genesis, not to impose himself upon another. His light blue eyes, set deep within the face, are actively and continually looking. He seems, by some unconscious division of labor, to have given them that one function and no other, leaving communication to the rest of the face. The mouth frequently breaks into a disarming smile. The voice is light in timbre, with a rough edge that corresponds to his visage. The Irish accent is, as one would expect, combined with slight inflections from the French. His tweed suit was a baggy gray and green. He wore a brown knit sports shirt with no tie.

We walked down the Rue de L'Arcade, thence along beside the Madeleine and across to a sidewalk cafe opposite that church. The conversation that ensued may have been engrossing but it could hardly be called world-shattering. For one thing, the world that Beckett sees is already shattered. His talk turns to what he calls "the mess," or sometimes "this buzzing confusion."



Brassai (Rapho-Guillumette)

I reconstruct his sentences from notes made immediately after our conversation. What appears here is shorter than what he actually said but very close to his own words.

"The confusion is not my invention. We cannot listen to a conversation for five minutes without being acutely aware of the confusion. It is all around us and our only chance now is to

let it in. The only chance of renovation is to open our eyes and see the mess. It is not a mess you can make sense of."

I suggested that one must let it in because it is the truth, but Beckett did not take to the word truth.

"What is more true than anything else? To swim is true, and to sink is true. One is not more

true than the other. One cannot speak anymore of being, one must speak only of the mess. When Heidegger and Sartre speak of a contrast between being and existence, they may be right, I don't know, but their language is too philosophical for me. I am not a philosopher. One can only speak of what is in front of him, and that now is simply the mess."

Then he began to speak about the tension in art between the mess and form. Until recently, art has withstood the pressure of chaotic things. It has held them at bay. It realized that to admit them was to jeopardize form. "How could the mess be admitted, because it appears to be the very opposite of form and therefore destructive of the very thing that art holds itself to be?" But now we can keep it out no longer, because we have come into a time when "it invades our experience at every moment. It is there and it must be allowed in."

I granted this might be so, but found the result to be even more attention to form than was the case previously. And why not? How, I asked, could chaos be admitted to chaos? Would not that be the end of thinking and the end of art? If we look at recent art we find it preoccupied with form. Beckett's own work is an example. Plays more highly formalized than "Waiting for Godot," "Endgame," and "Krapp's Last Tape" would be hard to find.

"What I am saying does not mean that there will henceforth be no form in art. It only means that there will be new form, and that this form will be of such a type that it admits the chaos and does not try to say that the chaos is really something else. The form and the chaos remain separate. The latter is not reduced to the former. That is why the form itself becomes a preoccupation, because it exists as a problem separate from the material it accommodates. To find a form that accommodates the mess, that is the task of the artist now."

Yet, I responded, could not similar things be said about the art of the past? Is it not characteristic of the greatest art that it confronts us with something we cannot clarify, demanding that the viewer respond to it in his own unpredictable way? What is the history of criticism but the history of men attempting to make sense of the manifold elements in art that will not allow themselves to be reduced to a single phi-

losophy or a single aesthetic theory? Isn't all art ambiguous?

"Not this," he said, and gestured toward the Madeleine. The classical lines of the church, which Napoleon thought of as a Temple of Glory, dominated all the scene where we sat. The Boulevard de la Madeleine, the Boulevard Malesherbes, and the Rue Royale ran to it with graceful flattery, bearing tidings of the Age of Reason. "Not this. This is clear. This does not allow the mystery to invade us. With classical art, all is settled. But it is different at Chartres. There is the unexplainable, and there art raises questions that it does not attempt to answer."

I asked about the battle between life and death in his plays. Didi and Gogo hover on the edge of suicide; Hamm's world is death and Clov may or may not get out of it to join the living child outside. Is this life-death question a part of the chaos?

"Yes. If life and death did not both present themselves to us, there would be no inscrutability. If there were only darkness, all would be clear. It is because there is not only darkness but also light that our situation becomes inexplicable. Take Augustine's doctrine of grace given and grace withheld: have you pondered the dramatic qualities in this theology? Two thieves are crucified with Christ, one saved and the other damned. How can we make sense of this division? In classical drama, such problems do not arise. The destiny of Racine's *Phèdre* is sealed from the beginning: she will proceed into the dark. As she goes, she herself will be illuminated. At the beginning of the play she has partial illumination and at the end she has complete illumination, but there has been no question but that she moves toward the dark. That is the play. Within this notion clarity is possible, but for us who are neither Greek nor Jansenist there is not such clarity. The question would also be removed if we believed in the contrary—total salvation. But where we have both dark and light we have also the inexplicable. The key word in my plays is 'perhaps'."

Given a theological lead, I asked what he thinks about those who find a religious significance to his plays.

"Well, really there is none at all. I have no religious feeling. Once I had a religious emotion.

It was at my first Communion. No more. My mother was deeply religious. So was my brother. He knelt down at his bed as long as he could kneel. My father had none. The family was Protestant, but for me it was only irksome and I let it go. My brother and mother got no value from their religion when they died. At the moment of crisis it had no more depth than an old-school tie. Irish Catholicism is not attractive, but it is deeper. When you pass a church on an Irish bus, all the hands flurry in the sign of the cross. One day the dogs of Ireland will do that too and perhaps also the pigs."

But do the plays deal with the same facets of experience religion must also deal with?

"Yes, for they deal with distress. Some people object to this in my writing. At a party an English intellectual—so-called—asked me why I write always about distress. As if it were perverse to do so! He wanted to know if my father had beaten me or my mother had run away from home to give me an unhappy childhood. I told him no, that I had had a very happy childhood. Then he thought me more perverse than ever. I left the party as soon as possible and got into a taxi. On the glass partition between me and the driver were three signs: one asked for help for the blind, another help for orphans, and the third for relief for the war refugees. One does not have to look for distress. It is screaming at you even in the taxis of London."

Lunch was over, and we walked back to the hotel with the light and dark of Paris screaming at us.

The personal quality of Samuel Beckett is similar to qualities I had found in the plays. He says nothing that compresses experience within a closed pattern. "Perhaps" stands in place of commitment. At the same time, he is plainly sympathetic, clearly friendly. If there were only the mess, all would be clear; but there is also compassion.

As a Christian, I know I do not stand where Beckett stands, but I do see much of what he sees. As a writer on the theater, I have paid close attention to the plays. Harold Clurman is right to say that "Waiting for Godot" is a reflection (he calls it a distorted reflection) "of the impasse and disarray of Europe's present politics, ethic, and common way of life."

Yet it is not only Europe the play refers to. "Waiting for Godot" sells even better in America than in France. The consciousness it mirrors may have come earlier to Europe than to America, but it is the consciousness that most "mature" societies arrive at when their successes in technological and economic systematization propel them into a time of examining the not-strictly-practical ends of culture. America is now joining Europe in this "mature" phase of development. Whether any of us remain in it long will depend on what happens as a result of the technological and economic revolutions now going on in the countries of Asia and Africa, and also of course on how long the cold war remains cold. At present no political party in Western Europe or America seems possessed of a philosophy of social change adequate to the pressures of current history.

In the Beckett plays, time does not go forward. We are always at the end, where events repeat themselves ("Waiting for Godot"), or hover at the edge of nothingness ("Endgame"), or turn back to the long-ago moment of genuine life ("Krapp's Last Tape"). This retreat from action may disappoint those of us who believe that the events of the objective world must still be dealt with. Yet it would be wrong to conclude that Beckett's work is "pessimistic." To say "perhaps," as the plays do, is not to say "no." The plays do not say that there is no future but that we do not see it, have no confidence about it, and approach it hopelessly. Apart from messianic Marxism, where is there today a faith asserting the contrary that succeeds in shaping a culture?

The walls that surround the characters of Beckett's plays are not walls that nature and history have built irrespective of the decisions of men. They are the walls of one's own attitude toward his situation. The plays are themselves evidence of a human capacity to see one's situation and by that very fact to transcend it. That is why Beckett can say that letting in "the mess" may bring with it a "chance of renovation." It is also why he is wrong, from philosophy's point of view, to say that there is *only* "the mess." If that were all there is, he could not recognize it as such. But the plays and the novels contain more, and that more is transcendence of the self and the situation.



In "Waiting for Godot" Beckett has a very simple and moving description of human self-transcendence. Vladimir and Estragon (Didi and Gogo) are discussing man, who bears his "little cross" until he dies and is forgotten. In a beautiful passage that is really a duet composed of short lines from first one pair of lips and then the other, the two tramps speak of their inability to keep silent. As Gogo says, "It's so we won't hear . . . all the dead voices." The voices of the dead make a noise like wings, sand, or leaves, all speaking at once, each one to itself, whispering, rustling, and murmuring.

Vladimir: What do they say?  
 Estragon: They talk about their lives  
 Vladimir: To have lived is not enough for them.  
 Estragon: They have to talk about it.  
 Vladimir: To be dead is not enough for them.  
 Estragon: It is not sufficient.  
*Silence*  
 Vladimir: They make a noise like feathers.  
 Estragon: Like leaves.  
 Vladimir: Like ashes.  
 Estragon: Like leaves.

In this passage, Didi and Gogo are like the dead, and the dead are like the living, because all are incapable of keeping silent. The description of the dead voices is also a description of living voices. In either case, neither to live nor to die is "enough." One must talk about it. The human condition is self-reflection, self-transcendence. Beckett's plays are the whispering, rustling, and murmuring of man refusing merely to exist.

Is it not true that self-transcendence implies freedom, and that freedom is either the most glorious or the most terrifying of facts, depending on the vigor of the spirit that contemplates it? It is important to notice that the rebukes to

Beckett's "despair" have mostly come from the dogmatists of humanist liberalism, who here reveal, as so often they do, that they desire the reassurance of certainty more than they love freedom. Having recognized that to live is not enough, they wish to fasten down in dogma the way that life ought to be lived. Beckett suggests something more free—that life is to be seen, to be talked about, and that the way it is to be lived cannot be stated unambiguously but must come as a response to that which one encounters in "the mess." He has devised his works in such a way that those who comment upon them actually comment upon themselves. One cannot say, "Beckett has said so and so," for Beckett has said, "Perhaps." If the critics and the public see only images of despair, one can only deduce that they are themselves despairing.

Beckett himself, or so I take it, has repented of the desire for certainty. There are therefore released in him qualities of affirmation that his interpreters often miss. That is why the laughter in his plays is warm, his concern for his characters affectionate. His warm humor and affection are not the attributes of defeatism but the consequences of what Paul Tillich has called "the courage to be."



*Tom F. Driver teaches theater, poetry, and theology at Union Theological Seminary in New York and holds the Ph. D. from Columbia University. He is the author of The Sense of History in Greek and Shakespearean Drama (Columbia University Press, 1960) and writes frequently on the theater for The Christian Century and the Tulane Drama Review. He is a former theater critic for The New Republic.*

# suicide in denmark

by HERBERT HENDIN

The famous suicide rate in the Scandinavian countries has been blamed on all sorts of things, including 'socialism.' A psychoanalyst with intimate knowledge of Denmark makes some suggestions.

Last summer, I had completed my work on the problem of suicide in Denmark, and was in Stockholm arranging to do similar work, when President Eisenhower made the speech in which he linked suicide to the practice of socialism in a "fairly friendly European country." That fairly friendly country (he was evidently referring to Sweden) immediately became somewhat less so. The outcry in Denmark from the public and press indicated that the Danes too took the remarks quite personally—Denmark has a still higher rate than Sweden. Even Norway, which has a low suicide rate, but equally developed social welfare measures, was aggrieved. The incident was uncommon only because of Mr. Eisenhower's position. The substance of the comment was familiar enough.

The Danish suicide rate is 22 in 100,000. It is twice that of the United States or England, over three times that of Holland, and there is

evidence that it has been higher than that of most of the rest of Europe for the last hundred years. Although it is at present equalled by the suicide rates in Switzerland, West Germany, Austria, and Japan, one can say that, excepting the Japanese, the Danish suicide rate is the most publicized. Certainly it is only in Denmark that visitors on the tourist buses are told by their guides about silverware, Tuborg and Carlsberg beer—and the high local suicide rate.

Long before Mr. Eisenhower's remarks, the problem of suicide in Denmark had been caught up in arguments pro and con about the social welfare measures that obtain in Denmark. Certainly suicide is a measure of social tension within a given society, and studying the motivations of suicidal patients in that society will throw a good deal of light on the sources of those tensions. But suicide is only one barometer of social tension. Crime, alcoholism, homosexu-

ality and neurosis are equally such barometers. One cannot consult one such index without reference to all the others. For example, the Danish homicide rate is strikingly low. While their suicide rate is twice that of the United States, the United States' homicide rate is ten times that of Denmark.

Other questions about Danish suicide are of equal or greater interest than simply the question of its frequency. What motivates a Dane to suicide? Are his reasons different from those of an American or a German? What light do his reasons throw on the particular pressures and tensions within his country? The purpose of studying the motivations of individual Danish suicidal patients is also to answer questions like these. This leads to a consideration of what might be called national character and national psychosocial conflicts. Such study is an outgrowth of the work pioneered by Columbia's Abram Kardiner, who has for many years been concerned with correlating social institutions with individual character. My own research with suicidal patients in the United States brought me to this line of inquiry some time ago, and, when it came to studying the Danes, gave me a good basis for making comparisons. For the present purpose, I think it is possible to demonstrate that suicide is at least the likely form of expression that certain social tensions would take in Denmark, given the particular Danish character and circumstances.

Denmark lends itself well to a study of national character and institutions. Although the rural areas of Jutland and Zealand are as different from Copenhagen as rural Iowa is from New York City, nevertheless Denmark is homogeneous in her traditions, institutions and attitudes in comparison to the hybrid and diverse population of the United States. It was fortunate for this study that an extremely high percentage of the Danish people, including those of relatively little general education, speak English fluently, English being a compulsory language from the beginning of school in Denmark. It was additionally fortunate because my interviewing technique was for the most part psychoanalytic in nature; that is, it relied as much on what the patient unwittingly revealed as on what he actually said. And perhaps my own relative un-

familiarity with the institutions and attitudes of the country turned out to be more of an advantage than a disadvantage. Every day I would be struck by attitudes on the part of my patients remarkably different from attitudes common in the United States but which I would have taken for granted and overlooked had I spent my life in Denmark.

For example, one afternoon I heard a young Danish soldier at the Copenhagen Military Hospital, who had made a suicide attempt, threatening his Danish psychiatrist with a successful attempt if he were returned to camp. The doctor replied that he didn't believe the boy would actually kill himself. The boy in turn said that the doctor couldn't in fact be certain, and that if he did kill himself it would be on the doctor's conscience. Such incidents are extremely common in Denmark, and threatening suicide is perhaps the commonest way that a Danish boy will try to get out of the army. How different from the behavior of American servicemen. Not that our boys want to get out of the service any the less, but how different is the means they are likely to employ—vague psychosomatic complaints or difficult-to-diagnose syndromes (including, for instance, the famous low back pain), are probably the most common. Suicide threats are relatively infrequent. The American boy feels that the threat of suicide is futile for he has little expectation that those around him are going to take him at all seriously; and in a large measure he is right. The Danish boy, on the other hand, can be quite certain that such threats will arouse immediate concern and anxiety among his comrades and superiors. In the United States, one finds that suicide threats occur less among the military than among civilians. To be effective, a threat must have a receiver, and among Americans such threats are usually directed at mothers, fathers, wives and husbands. The American sergeant is none of these.

On another afternoon, while a rather sick Danish girl was telling me about her life and childhood, she stopped and said that she could go no further because to do so would only make me feel guilty. Why should it make me feel guilty? Well, she said, because I probably had had a happier childhood and I would feel guilty on that account. I assured her that since I did not feel responsible for her unhappy childhood, I

would not feel guilty—that, at most, I might only feel fortunate to have escaped whatever she had gone through. She was then able to continue. But what was this girl doing? She obviously *wished* to make me feel guilty, and then felt guilty herself for wanting to make me feel so. What a refined, sophisticated and complex psychology of guilt! The behavior of this girl and the Danish soldier could be reiterated in a number of similar illustrations and was indicative of a particular and extraordinary knowledge of, use of, and ability to arouse guilt in others through one's own suffering or misfortune; and the expectation of being able to do so has important bearing on the whole question of suicide.

It also raises the question of where this is learned. Does the Danish mother use the arousal of guilt as a disciplinary technique and, if so, how much? It is one of many kinds of discipline that can be used with children. It is in fact used by many subcultures within the United States, and no one can say for certain how effective it is compared with other forms of discipline. But from interviews with Danish patients and talks with Danish mothers and Danish psychiatrists, particularly those working with children, it is evident that this is the principal form of discipline used in Denmark. The mother simply lets the child know how hurt she is and how badly she feels at his or her misbehavior. The child is thereby disciplined—and at the same time gets a lesson in the technique of arousing guilt which he can later put to his own uses.

Discussion of the problem of guilt leads naturally enough to the whole question of aggression and how it is handled, expressed or controlled. In general, far less overt destructiveness or violence is evident among Danish patients than will be seen among American patients. Even in the United States, patients of Scandinavian origin in a "disturbed ward" are more apt to be mute than actively enraged and throwing things. A disturbed ward in a Danish hospital is altogether a far quieter place than a similar ward in one of our hospitals. The strikingly low Danish homicide rate, in comparison with the American, is also relevant here. In a recent year there were only twenty-eight homicides in

the entire country, thirteen of which were children killed in connection with their parents' suicides.

This control of aggression begins, of course, in childhood. The Danish child, while indulged in many ways, is not permitted anything like the aggressiveness toward his parents and siblings that is tolerated in an American child. Consequently, Danish children appear to Americans exceedingly well-disciplined and well-behaved, while American children often seem like monsters to the Danes.

If there is, by the way, a socially acceptable outlet for aggression among the Danes, it is their sense of humor. They are very fond of teasing and are proud of their wit. Their humor will often cloak aggressive barbs in such a manner as to get the point across without actually provoking open friction.

Now certainly a great deal has been written, with regard to suicide, about the importance of aggression turned inward. Yet, it is far from the whole story about suicide in general and very far from the whole story about suicide in Denmark. The English, for example, curb aggression in their children and have a low homicide rate without the high Danish suicide rate.

It is rather the forms of dependence in Denmark that are unique, in my observation, and equally important and fundamental to the whole Danish vulnerability to depression and suicide. As one Danish psychiatrist put it to me, you can, in a way, divide Denmark into two groups: those who are looking for someone to take care of them and those who are looking for someone to take care of. There is a good deal of truth in this epigram.

Here, too, it is best to begin with the child. The Danish child's dependence on his mother is encouraged far more than that of the American child. Danish mothers are most apt to boast of how well their children look, how well they eat, and how much they weigh—and far less likely to boast of those activities or qualities of the child that in any way tend to separate him from the mother: how fast the child can walk or talk or do things by himself. The child is fondled, coddled and hugged more often, and probably to a later age, than is general in the United States. The American mother may not curb her child's aggressiveness—out of the fear that she



may damage his initiative. The Danish mother is much less ruled by this concern and the child's aggressiveness is strictly checked—is, in a sense, part of the price he pays for his dependence. Of course, the very checking of the child's aggressiveness serves, in turn, to increase and foster this dependence. Such behavior appears to make the separation from the mother, when it does come, all the harder to bear. Many seek a return to the maternal relationship either directly or through a mother-substitute, while others achieve this kind of gratification vicariously—through attending to the needs of the first group.

Of course, mixtures and alternations are common. Characteristic was the attitude of one 22-year-old Danish girl who was unable to manage her own life in Copenhagen and who yearned to return to her parents' farm in north Zealand and to be taken care of by her mother. In the next breath she expressed the idea that perhaps the solution to her problem was to go to England and live with a young artist she had met while there on a visit, since he was totally helpless and needed her.

The search for this dependence results in greater need of the sexes for each other, and more moving of the sexes toward each other, with less fear and more ease than is usual in the United States. Mutual attraction is not impeded, either, by the extensive competition between the sexes that is so common in the United States. Of course, these expectations of dependent gratification from the opposite sex are often disappointed and are a major cause for the ending of relationships and a major factor in Danish divorces.

The Danish husband is very often rather like a privileged eldest child. He usually has little to do with the discipline of the children. Resentment on the part of fathers at the birth of children is quite common and is most strikingly evident in the widespread loss of potency or loss of sexual interest on the part of the husband after the birth of the first child.

On the other hand, frigidity among Danish women appears to be as widespread as it is in the United States. This, despite their very feminine manner, their non-competitiveness with men, and the fact that they are permitted somewhat more sexual freedom during adolescence than Americans are, though no more dur-

ing childhood. (The attitude of Danish mothers toward sexual activity in their children is generally to prohibit it and at the same time to deny its existence—very much as American mothers do.) Yet female frigidity does not appear to be of the guilt-ridden sort common in the United States thirty years ago, or of the competitive sort common today. Rather it seems to be caused by the woman's dependent longings and by her image of herself as a little girl rather than a grown woman.

It is only this dependency concern that can explain the Danes' extreme vulnerability to depression and suicide following the ending of relationships. Both the protector and the protected will be vulnerable in such a situation. Typical was the attitude of one man who made a serious suicide attempt when his wife left him after twenty years of marriage. He had not been happy with her and in many ways he had precipitated her leaving; but three months later he said he had no desire to live because there was no one to take care of his apartment, to prepare his meals, and to attend to his needs.

I have spoken of the manipulation of guilt, the control of aggression, and the forms of dependency. My last observation on the subject of dependency is perhaps the most interesting. Related to the whole question of dependency but important in its own right, are the Danish attitudes toward death and afterlife and suicide itself.

In working with suicidal patients in the United States, it is not unusual for one to encounter fantasies of reunion after death with a lost loved one. But in Denmark such fantasies are so much more common as to be almost the rule. This, despite the fact that most of the Danes I interviewed tended to stress their "not being religious," with an overtone of pride. Yet, the Lutheran version of an afterlife is universally taught in the schools and the child often picks up the idea of reunion after death from his parents even before school. Even if formal religion ceases to be of interest in later life, the idea of afterlife and a reunion with loved ones after death remains. Such fantasies are not only more common among the Danes, they are more openly expressed; with American patients they generally have to be ascertained from

dreams. Certainly the hold of such ideas is consistent with the dependency constellation of which I have already spoken.

I saw one Danish patient with such a fantasy following a serious suicide attempt in which he had turned on the gas. He was a 56-year-old man who had been separated for several months from his wife. When questioned, he expressed the idea that after death he expected to be reunited with his mother who had died eight years before—and eventually, following his wife's death, with his wife. He felt that he and his wife would not have the difficulties between them in an afterlife that they had had on earth. He recalled having held such a conception of an afterlife from his earliest school years, and perhaps before. When asked if he had not also been taught, as are Catholics in America, that, yes, you would go to heaven but, no, you would not get there if you killed yourself, he replied that he had been taught that but he did not believe this part of the teaching. He felt there was nothing one would not be forgiven if one repented. The last thing he had done before turning on the gas was to say a prayer in which he asked forgiveness for what he was about to do; with that, he felt confident that his admission to an afterlife was assured. His attitudes in these matters turned out to be quite typical of Danish patients.

And in fact the best and most perceptive prototypes of such reunion-in-death fantasies, apart from the dreams of individual patients, are to be found in that singular Danish literature, the fairy tales of Hans Christian Andersen. There is "The Little Match Girl" who, while freezing to death in the cold, lights her matches and sees the image of her grandmother, who is the only person who ever loved her and with whom she is reunited after her death. There is "The Steadfast Tin Soldier" who can only be united with the ballerina doll in the fire that destroys both of them. The Andersen stories are a mine of these fantasies of death, dying, and afterlife. Suicide itself is treated almost directly in "The Old Street Lamp." The lamp fears decomposition, and it is relieved of this fear when it obtains the power to kill itself, so to speak, by turning to rust in one day. (Suicidal patients often feel a sense of mastery over all sorts of anxieties, including fears of death:

their idea is that they can end their lives at will.) The lamp finally decides not to use this power, that even though a new existence might be better, it will not seek it, since there are others (the watchman and his wife) who care about it and whom it must consider.

Fantasies of rebirth are often associated with reunion after death. "The Ugly Duckling" appeals to the idea that while in the present life one may be unloved and unwanted, in some future existence one's whole state can be quite different, the duckling is "reborn" as a swan. While there is no dying in the story, the psychological idea of rebirth is there.

By and large, the love-death theme—the idea that without love there will be death, but that perhaps in death the desire for love will be gratified—runs through the Andersen stories. The boy who is in bondage to "The Snow Queen" is emotionally frozen: he has a "heart like ice" and can obtain pleasure in reason only. It is only by the strength of the love and faith of little Gerda that he can be returned to normal.

One should point out that these are by no means the universal themes of all fairy tales. Only consider that in the Andersen tales competition and performance are not important. Neither giants nor dragons have to be killed in order for the hero to succeed in whatever he is up to.

To be sure, death is as taboo a subject in Denmark as in the United States, if not more so. Parents are uncomfortable when their children bring it up. The Danes find funerals painful and wish them over as soon as possible, and they are often uncomfortable around a bereaved person. They expect a short period of grieving and then the subject is to be dropped. And such discomfort is in keeping with their anxiety about separation, loss, or abandonment by a source of dependency gratification. Several Danish psychiatrists, psychologists, and sociologists have expressed the idea that a longer period of grieving would probably be salutary, a sort of safety valve.

Suicide itself is less taboo than it is in the United States and is probably much less so than in Catholic countries. Patients who make suicide attempts and fail express less shame at having made the attempt than do such patients in the United States. The Danish patient is more

apt to express shame at not having successfully completed the act than he is over having made the attempt. While the wife or husband of the suicidal patient may feel some shame, the attitude of those around the patient is generally one of sympathy or pity. A Danish clergyman has admitted to me that the early church teaching that suicide is immoral has little effect, even in religious families, when suicide actually occurs or is attempted. Then, too, there is bound to be a weakening of such a taboo when so many Danes know personally friends and relatives who have killed themselves or made suicide attempts. Suicide does not have to become institutionalized, as it is in Japan, for it to be a known and almost acceptable expression of unhappiness.

I have dwelt on differences between the Danish and American characters. But it is certainly true that in studying suicide in the United States, one may observe any one of the character traits that I have described. American patients of English extraction or Puritan heritage will exhibit great control over the expression of aggression—but people of this background also discourage feelings of excessive dependency. Patients of southern or eastern European background often use the arousal of guilt to express hostility or to obtain obedience to their wishes; but, just as characteristically, they don't suppress aggression as do the Danes. It is the combination of traits we have examined that would seem to make the Danes liable to suicide rather than to other forms of discharge of aggression and frustration.

The study of suicide in Denmark (or elsewhere) throws light on the particular anxieties and preoccupations of the people in that country. Yet one pattern often associated with suicide elsewhere is important in illuminating Danish character by the very fact of its rarity among the Danes. And in speaking of it, we shall return to the question of socialism raised at the beginning.

The pattern I refer to is organized around performance and competitiveness—and it seems to have little bearing on Danish suicide. If only because of Denmark's proximity to Germany, and because part of her land area had once been controlled by Germany, I looked for

the frequently described Germanic hyper-consciousness about performance. In this pattern, the individual has rather fixed, high, and rigid expectations of himself, and a great deal of aggression is tied up with the achievement of these expectations. Failure of achievement in such a culture can be a direct cause for committing suicide. And in such cultures the failure to achieve love will not be interpreted, as in the Danish culture, as an emotional deprivation but more importantly as a poor performance in which the individual gives himself, so to speak, a low mark on love. I have noted that competitiveness and performance do not figure significantly in the Hans Christian Andersen fairy tales. But the conquest of giants and dragons is crucial and decisive in the folklore of Germanic cultures and the winning of the heroine at the end may be only incidental. In the light of all we have said about Danish family life, upbringing, and attitudes, it is probably not surprising that this performance pattern does not have the life-and-death meaning in Denmark that it appears to have in Germany, Switzerland, and in Japan as well.

Although he finds his fair share of competition in school, the Danish child is not particularly encouraged toward competitiveness by his family, and in general it is understood among both children and adults that one should not stand out too much in any direction, an attitude by no means unknown among Americans, but which is more intense among the Danes. Anyone who violates this rule against conspicuous high performance, whether it be the child at school or the adult at work, is subject to a good deal of envy and dislike.

What is the importance, then, of Danish socialism in fostering the national attitudes toward competition and dependency? Certainly most of these attitudes appear to antedate the social and economic changes of the last few decades in Denmark. All that can be said, I think, is that Danish socialism may give expression to and reinforce these qualities and attitudes in the national character, and these qualities and attitudes, in turn, undoubtedly shape the particular form that social change has taken. Government concern for the individual gives a kind of permission for the overt expression of the longing to be taken care of. Even the tone of the letters



to the newspapers in Denmark indicates a feeling of passively endured injustice, particularly under personal economic difficulty, and reflects a lesser feeling of responsibility for one's personal destiny than we are accustomed to.

The numerous social welfare agencies give opportunity to those wishing to care for the dependent needs of others, and there is a greater concern than in the United States on the part of those administering the help—whether it be medical care or financial aid—with the welfare of everyone; and there is a virtually unanimous tendency to feel personally responsible for all suffering. In discussing this at a seminar in Copenhagen, one doctor gave me as an illustration—with the aptness of which all agreed—that the entire country can experience a wave of guilt in reading a newspaper account of a man who died in his room and whose body went undiscovered for several days. It is assumed that he was lonely, uncared-for, and probably without friends; virtually everyone may feel personally responsible.

But this is all a far cry from equating socialism and suicide. The earlier-mentioned presence in Norway of equally developed social welfare measures together with a particularly low suicide rate demonstrates the falsity of the equation.

Let us look more closely at the Danish socialistic system. With its lack of natural resources, it is difficult to visualize Denmark as wealthy today under any economic system. Were she to lean toward more capitalistic practices, there would be no great amount of wealth for her to "capitalize." It is also hard to imagine Denmark surviving in the competitive international economy without a greater degree of internal economic cooperation and planning than we seem to find necessary.

Both the lack of wealth within the country and the high taxes required for Danish social welfare activities limit the accumulation of wealth by individual men. The very fact of this limitation may make for less competition. Individual initiative will accomplish less for someone trying to change his economic situation than it may, for example, in the United States or in Denmark's wealthier neighbor, Sweden. Thus, though in one sense economic life seems more difficult, in another sense Denmark appears to have escaped some of the pressure of the con-

tinuing chase for wealth and goods that is seen in so much of the rest of the western world. Living in Copenhagen, one can actually feel in a relatively short time the more relaxed pace of life there in comparison with the pace in cities like New York or Stockholm.

We do not know for certain how a particular people hit upon a particular set of institutions and attitudes with which to regulate their lives, bring up their children, and earn their bread—out of the several alternatives that may be available. We do know that once they choose a particular way it will have profound *further* effects upon character attitudes and institutions. Yet psycho-social studies are not developed highly enough to allow us to pass judgment as to better or worse ways of doing things or to make very definitive suggestions about doing them differently, either in our own country or elsewhere. For the present, we must gather more knowledge as to the ways in which different social institutions and customs produce individual characters and attitudes. It seems to me that the relatively greater homogeneity of the people in each of the Scandinavian countries would make the study of the differences among those countries and between them and ourselves a particularly fruitful source of information. Further, the Scandinavian countries are pioneering in several social and economic measures in which the rest of the world is interested; some of their ideas and plans have been and will be followed by other countries. If we can learn something from the inevitable difficulties they are bound to encounter in going first, we can only be grateful and trust that they will not begrudge the fact that our paths have been made easier.

*Herbert Hendin, a graduate of Columbia College and Columbia University's Psychoanalytic Clinic, has done research into suicide for ten years. His several articles on the subject include a more detailed exposition in The Psychiatric Quarterly of the material covered in the present article. Dr. Hendin teaches at the Psychoanalytic Clinic and maintains a private practice in New York City.*



# FRENCH into ENGLISH:

## *An ABC of Translation*

by RICHARD HOWARD

The translator of the de Gaulle Memoirs and most of the new French novels confides the alphabetical joys and sorrows of his crucial craft.

Articles of Faith: Translations of French writing are made for people who do not read French and are to be judged from this perspective. The fact that the necessary demolition work is so often done by critics and reviewers ("Miss X has preferred to translate *esprit* throughout as 'spirit' when a more flexible rendering, such as 'mind' or 'essence,' would have seen her over many hurdles") means that the publisher has not performed his task properly: all translations must be edited. Editors are to translators rather what

I imagine directors are to actors, and I for one have always found their suggestions invaluable, though I have not always accepted them. So frequently a translation has to be recast, by which I mean its tone must be reconstructed, not its words, even though the former consists of the latter and the latter are not *wrong*. Problems in translation rarely result from wrong words; more frequently they are a matter of tempo, of flexibility, and of accent. This is why it is easy, as Gide somewhere remarks, to discredit a translation, to alert readers to obvious errors, but hard to appreciate and point out fundamental virtues.

Even though, as Eric Bentley has said, we do not have a profession of thoroughly competent translators, yet I advance from my own experience that it is not possible to read a translation, even a translation properly edited, as a *work in English* if the reader knows French and is concerned with the problems and practices of equivalents between the two languages. I have often wondered at the policy of *The New York Times Book Review*, for example, which assigns all French books in English to be reviewed by translators of French, professors of French literature or critics of French birth, though I confess that the consequent flying fur and wrist-slapping is one of the few diverting spectacles the *Book Review* affords. Are books by women always reviewed by women? Is the reviewer of Katharine Anne Porter's forthcoming novel more likely to be a woman or someone who is interested in novels? Similarly, would it not be more interesting to know what a critic of the novel makes of, say, *Martereau* than the reactions of a well-known translator of other French fiction? After all, now that the foreign work has been made available, let us have the reactions of the native 'common reader'—or uncommon—not those of the expert on foreign words and works.

As for taking criticism of one's own work, my barber advises his bald customers, as I have learned, that there is only one thing they can do: resign themselves, and I counsel a similar stoicism without being very good at it myself. All translators, I suspect, are nervous wrecks unless they have bastioned themselves within the citadel of academic infallibility.

Grievances: *See All Other Articles*

Hand-to-Mouth: Why is so much left to chance?

Why are the translator's arrangements so casual? I think because for the publisher translations are obstacles in the way of a book's publication, deterrents—and expensive ones—of the normal author-to-audience process. Significant of this attitude is the problem of payments. If you make your living by what you are paid (and when you are paid it—if for tax reasons you prefer to be paid in installments), it is often inconvenient to be paid only upon completion (and approval) of the work. Yet to arrange for an advance on a translation is not always an easy matter; it is a favor, rarely a spontaneous or even readily agreed-to motion on the publisher's part. Only the translator-adaptors of hit Broadway plays (the category of translator-adaptor exists because our theatrical producers have the notion that a foreign play has to be qualified for American consumption; such a notion may be correctly inspired, but the results have so far scarcely justified the genre, it seems to me) get paid on a royalty basis for their pains. In other cases, the professional translator must rely on his speed, his English, and his sense of honor.

I recall translating a short novel by Giraudoux for my friends, before I had any notion of becoming a professional translator. The task took many months, usually three or four hours of work a day. Years later I managed to interest a paper-back publisher in this version, and was offered the astonishingly small sum of \$250 for the text. Since I preferred to see the work in print rather than in my desk drawer, I accepted the pittance. During the same period I was asked by a film producer to make a "rough" translation of a novel by the author of *The Bridge Over the River Kwai*. I was able to furnish this in four days, for which labor—in my ignorance—I asked \$400 (I learned later that I could have stipulated a thousand and received it. *Movieland!*). The American publishers of M. Boule asked me to "polish" this version and paid another \$200 for the pumicing, admitting they were getting off cheap. Dramatic contrasts like these abound in the translator's professional life, and I suppose the art of the translation, if the phrase has any meaning, is the art of serving God and Mammon in proportions that permit survival.

Isolation: See Other Translators

**Jackets:** Except for very small houses, most American publishers entrust the presentation of a new book to their promotion department. The salesmen must be informed how to interest bookstores in "the list," and of course the jacket copy and press releases must be designed and composed with the customer in mind. In the case of nine-tenths of the books I have translated, I have been asked to provide information about the contents, summaries of the "story" and every possible angle and gimmick. Yet only on exception has such material been used, and in general jacket copy for European books is inadequate when it is not downright untrue. Yet for lack of well-defined contractual arrangements, the translator rarely has a say in the packaging of a book once his manuscript is in the copy-editor's hands, though he may be the last person to have read the book before it reaches the stands.

**Keys:** French-English dictionaries most valuable to the translator are accurately described by Justin O'Brien in his article "From French to English" in the Harvard Press volume *On Translation*. Keys, unfortunately, are made only for particular locks, and no list of false cognates will keep a translator infallibly on the right track; if a French writer refers to Emerson's essay as "Confiance-en-soi," the translator must somehow know what is meant is not "Self-Confidence" but "Self-Reliance." Such knowledge (and without it, what forgiveness?) is a matter of experience and of reading, and therefore no translator can hope to avoid errors entirely. All he can do is improve.

**Low Life:** It is more difficult to translate French texts dealing with pornographic subjects, metaphorical argot and low life than anything else. The French have developed a middle language, somewhere between the sewer and the smell of the lamp, which in English is almost unavailable. We have either the very coarse or the clinical, and I do not see how we can produce an English version of a masterpiece like *Histoire d'O* until we work up a language as pure and precise—though as suggestive and colorful—as that of Pauline Réage, whose French, for all the scabrous horror of her subject, is among the finest of the century.

**Many Hands Across the Sea:** If an American

publisher has the opportunity to split translation costs with a British publisher, total production costs are less, but then on which side of the Atlantic is the actual work to be done? Since British translators are so badly paid, the choice is almost always made in favor of expedience. Yet a number of American houses have painfully learned the amount of doctoring that must be done on British work—so extensive that it is frequently as costly as the initial difference in fees between American and British work. Revisions, aside from those necessary to accord the two languages, dialogue, and emphasis, affect the very attitude toward the process itself: as far as I can judge, the British reader prefers his translated French book *not* to sound like any English compatriot might produce. To publish a British translation here *tout court* is usually to confuse or irritate a good many readers, and I should suppose the same applies in England with regard to American texts that have not been thoroughly edited.

**Newcomers:** It would be churlish indeed, expressing so much dissatisfaction with the character and conditions of my trade, not to welcome to it anyone likely to change them for the better. The profession is not "crowded," as I was assured when I first contemplated giving up my job as a lexicographer to adopt and enter it; it is not crowded because even if you translate only one book for publication and turn it into sensitive English in the spirit of the original you belong to the rank of professional translators and will be with Saint Jerome as Keats wanted to be with the English poets; and even if you translate fifty books and your English is blurred by incomprehension you are a blundering amateur and Saint Jerome will only sick his lion on you.

**Other Translators:** I have never had the opportunity of discussing my work with other translators. As I suggest in *Articles of Faith*, I believe I am unable to read French writing in translation fairly, and I suspect other translators of similar incapacities where I am concerned. Even so, however, I am curious about my confreres. Though I know a number of scholars, many editors and even one or two reviewers who have *done* translations, I do not know any of the men and women of my profession. I often wonder

about them—do they have as paranoiac a sense of me as I of them? What would we have to say to each other at a party, not to mention a panel?

**Professionalism:** "No one," remarks Mr. O'Brien, "*wants* to be a professional translator." He means, of course, that no one wants the drudgery of having to accept almost any assignment. In America, however, circumstances are such that one can become a professional translator and still translate, almost without exception, only books one enjoys putting into English. My own experience has repeatedly impressed me with the good will of American publishers, their eagerness to publish foreign work if it has merit and the slightest chance of attracting readers. Again and again I have been able to approach editors with projects which have been welcomed, encouraged, even accepted: the translator in America, if he has a sense of timing and repertory, is in a good position to do just the sort of work he likes, provided his interests are not impossibly parochial or obscure. That his financial rewards will be always adequate is another matter, but we are discussing professionalism, not profiteering.

**Qualifications:** It is folly to ask for a perfect knowledge of both languages. What translator has in even one direction the consummate gifts Mr. Beckett and Mr. Nabokov, those exasperating geniuses, have in two? With the exception of these writers, who have the advantage—*they* may think otherwise—of translating only their own work, I know no translator who, regularly translating French into English, can also translate English into French with the same degree of choice and charm. The standard equipment for translating into English, of course, is a knowledge of French which I suspect many French teachers would call "passive" or "reading" and a knowledge of English necessarily active (creative); to *speak* French properly and easily, to be at home in France—both in Paris and the country—and to maintain a wide acquaintance with French literature as a developing organism are, indeed, recommendations of the highest order. But I do not think they are supreme qualifications. I should think (exposing myself completely) that it is more important, more valuable for the translator of French to be at home in

English, to maintain the same wide acquaintance with his own literature that he keeps with the French, and to develop a strong and lively sense of the period qualities of his own tongue. A model is often necessary, and one must have freedom to reject the first possibility. Taking the cue from my author himself, I confess to doing a lot of prowling among translations of classical historians before I found the right movement and manner to aim at in rendering de Gaulle's *Mémoires de Guerre*: nineteenth-century versions of Tacitus. Naturally, such cue-taking can be carried too far. One author asked me to revise a translation I had made of his work, requesting that my treatment be "more Shakespearean and at the same time more in accord with the laws of Greek Tragedy." I'm not sure my revision followed these lines, but it involved another three weeks' work on a text already polished to the point of despair. No translation, of course, is ever finished; as Valéry said of poems, it can only be abandoned. My own training, aside from purely literary preparation, quite fortuitously happens to be lexicographical; for five years after college, graduate school and study in France I worked as an editor of American dictionaries, and I should imagine that the fact of passing the language word by word through my mind and hand some five or six times has been of considerable value in subsequent attempts to render French prose into English. Certainly more helpful than if I had been working on French lexicons.

**Rates:** In my experience, these vary widely: the standard minimum rate for most literary translations in America is ten dollars a thousand words. An experienced translator with a number of successful jobs to show for his efforts ("Mr. X has served his original faithfully." "Mrs. Y's English version is suggestive.") can reasonably hope for twelve dollars a thousand words. Difficult books, special problems, or books which must be translated quickly often bring the translator fifteen dollars a thousand words. (A type-written manuscript of two hundred pages, at this rate, earns about \$900. But this is tops.) Though I have translated some forty books and fifty articles, I have never been paid on a royalty basis (save in the case of a play), though this is partly because the books I have translated are

"difficult" and do not appeal—or have not appealed—to large audiences; in such cases, one prefers the bird in the hand.

**Secretaries:** Aside from plays, which I find I need to translate aloud from the very first, a secretary is a luxury. Even if the speed with which work can be executed is greatly increased, the margin of profit, never a fat one, cannot generally endure such paring.

**Titles:** My principal conflicts with a publisher or an editor, above the level of wrangles over money or time, have concerned titles. Three examples: a) Robbe-Grillet's novel *La Jalousie*, published as *Jealousy*, though scarcely a betrayal under its English title, attracted a few critical snipers, who pointed out that the French title was also a reference to the bamboo blinds through which the obsessed husband is constantly spying on his wife. I had submitted to the publisher the title *The Blind*, which I felt played on the same ambiguity between seeing and feeling, since for all his efforts the husband never saw anything certain between the slats of his blind. The publishers, however, felt that such a title would indicate to our American public a treatise on ophthalmology rather than a novel of passion. b) The publishers who asked me to translate Monique Lange's short, light novel of Parisian homosexual life *Les Poisson-Chats* had already paid for an attractive cover based on the title *The Kissing Fish*. Yet when I translated the book, it seemed to me such an expression was entirely improper, either as a rendering of the French title or as a suggestive English phrase. I had called the little book *Anne & The Boys*, but to my horror found that the cover, the spring list and the announcement in *Publishers' Weekly* made my preferences in the matter entirely academic. c) Claude Simon's novel *Le Vent*, in its first French edition, included a long subtitle—*A Tentative Reconstruction of a Baroque Altarpiece*—in small print. In the second French edition, contemporary with my translation, the subtitle was the same size as the words *The Wind*. And in the third, which appeared in France when the American edition was in the bookstores, the former subtitle was the title and *The Wind* had been relegated to an "identifying" spot on the book's spine. The American pub-



lisher felt that despite this progress in French, any such modifications in his edition were supererogatory, to say nothing of incomprehensible, and the book was resolutely titled *The Wind*, giving no hint of the original subtitle and the implied principles of composition. In all three of these cases, the publisher's notions of the book's appropriate title, at variance with the translator's, have resulted from an image of the book-buying public which is, to say the least, not flattering. But perhaps the translator occupies a position too high in the ivory tower for the exigencies of publishing; perhaps, indeed, the realities are sterner than he cares to admit. See Jackets.

**Umbrage:** As the tone of these notes may indicate, translation is an unkind profession. Though it is pleasant for an American translator to visit writers and editors in France, it would not be pleasant for him to encounter another translator there. I find I waver, in my attitude toward my work, between hoping to be ignored, unmentioned, or dismissed as "adequate" on the one hand, and gasping for insight, suggestion that is at once complimentary and helpful, on the other. It is useful to remember that "the art of translation is a subsidiary art, and derivative."

**Versions:** John Hollander has ingeniously called the O.E.D. to his support in pointing out that our frequent use of the word *version* as a "special form or variant of something resting upon limited authority or embodying a particular point of view" indicates that we think of it as different from a translation: there is almost always something queer about a version of a text, though not about a translation. Thus I would say that though we generally suppose we prefer a translation, once we have it we discover we would rather have a version.

**Writers:** Relations with the writers has turned out, in my experience, to be the greatest single reward the profession of translating has to offer, including the money. I think that the pleasure of being praised for good work and of being paid for it would otherwise be cancelled out by the anxiety over censure and the inadequacy of just what one is paid. As it is, there is this great human advantage which I have been

given so often, and which has become a central fact of my life, so that I can only be grateful to what might otherwise loom depressingly as a mug's game. When I began translating books, I had no idea that encounters with their authors would become so rich an experience. The first author I ever met whose work I had translated was Monsieur François-Régis Bastide, author of *Les Adieux*. I discovered that it was easier for me to understand this man's mind than that of many of my friends; I had assimilated so many of its characteristic—and also so many of its exceptional—gestures. Subsequent visits to France have offered so many repetitions of this experience, and in such a diversity of modes, that I can scarcely praise enough the "social" status of the translator—abroad. See Professionalism.

**XYZ:** Can a translation be better than the original? This is a hypocrite question I put here because I cannot think up any more letters. Since, as John Hollander says, no translation can ever be correct in quite the same way as an answer to a question like "Is it Tuesday?" the first answer is no; that is, if *better* means what Mr. Nabokov asks of a translation—lucid accuracy in the literal rendering of the author's words. On the other hand, questions like "How do you feel?" have answers which seem to be correct in a very different sense, and it is to this class of questions that my XYZ question belongs, and therefore gets the answer: yes. The point is, whether better or not, it can only be better English than the original French, which is the same thing as asking whether Molière wrote better plays than Milton wrote poems.

Richard Howard, a graduate of Columbia College, is a poet and author of fiction as well as a translator of works in every literary form. The present essay is adapted from *The Craft and Context of Translation*, edited by William Arrowsmith and Roger Shattuck, to be published soon for the Humanities Research Center by the University of Texas Press, copyright 1961 by William Arrowsmith and Roger Shattuck.

# RUSSIAN ON THE AISLE

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## CONVERSATION WITH A MOSCOW FILM CRITIC

by HERBERT FEINSTEIN

Alexander Karaganov, a first-rank art and film critic in Moscow, arrived in San Francisco on October 17, 1960, to be a judge in the fourth San Francisco International Film Festival. Mr. Karaganov reached the Golden Gate three days after Nikita Khrushchev had quit New York in a huff after his twenty-five day harangue at the United Nations. October 17th was the very day the Soviet Union expelled two young Americans as convicted spies.

How much happier were the travels of *this* Mr. K. For the first time in any American film festival, the Soviet Union entered a picture, "Ballad of a Soldier," which won as the best movie and as having the best director: Grigori Chukhrai, who traveled with Mr. Karaganov. Upon his arrival, a reporter asked Karaganov what he conceives the role of cinema to be. He said, "Movies should make men and women more clever, more beautiful, more spiritual." During his stay, I spoke to the Russian critic a number of times. I found him a shy, guarded, brilliant man, at times naive—possibly he was being profoundly shrewd. But I found, too, after the

briefest of artful dodging, that our shared interest in film spanned the abyss between our opposing political creeds.

Alexander Karaganov is an intellectual who is altogether a product of the Russian Revolution. Born in 1915, in the village of Martnov in the District of Vologda, he was, in 1939, graduated from the Institute of History, Philosophy, and Literature in Moscow. He lectured on literature in Stalingrad from 1939 until Hitler's invasion of Russia two years later. After the war, Karaganov became a reporter and critic for *Kino* magazine and the *Literary Gazette*. Karaganov is now director-general of *Art* magazine, and writes for various journals including *Kino Art*, *Theater*, *October*, and *Soviet Culture*. He is the author of three books; his most recent, *Characters and Circumstances*, came out in 1959.

The following talk is edited from a tape we cut at Mr. Karaganov's suite at the Sheraton-Palace Hotel in San Francisco on the afternoon of October 27, 1960.

*Feinstein*: What is your book *Characters and Circumstances* about?

*Karaganov*: This book consists of some of my articles on the problems of theater, movie art, and the theory of literature and art also. I tried in this book to express my opinion about the main problems of realism in art and social realism too, about the ways of artists, the way they transform their ideas into artistic form, about the impossibility of dividing the ideological conscience of their work from its artistic form. In my opinion these things can't be considered separately.

*F*: Are you concerned in this book primarily or exclusively with Russian writers, or do you go into, say, American and English literature too?

*K*: As a critic, I write mostly about Soviet writers, Soviet film and theatrical workers. But also I wrote some articles about Western literature and art too. And in this book there is one article about our opinion of freedom of art.

*F*: Who are some of the artists that you consider? Or, what works do you consider?

*K*: Before I wrote this article, I looked through many American and English magazines and newspapers; and I support those American

and English writers and critics who consider the problem of freedom of art in the right way, as I understand it; and, of course, I discuss those with whom I disagree.

*F:* Can you name some writers in America and England with whom you agree?

*K:* I think my greatest opinion is of Somerset Maugham and his book on literature. I try to observe his book from my point of view. And also John Lehmann from England, Archibald MacLeish from America, and some others.

*F:* I recall that Archibald MacLeish at one time believed very much that the artist has a responsibility towards society, to contribute something to the state or to the welfare of the people. Is that what attracts you about Archibald MacLeish?

*K:* I think that Archibald MacLeish is very right in this way of discussing the problem. Because it is quite clear for me that every artist has the duty before his own people and before mankind all.

*F:* Mr. MacLeish has changed a little now; he now says, "A poem should not mean/But be." He thinks that each work of art has a life of its own.

*K:* Perhaps I don't know his modern articles. What I meant, his articles which were written three years ago.

*F:* I think that in sum, Mr. MacLeish does support that social position. Since you're here about films, Mr. Karaganov, what roles do you think films can play in the bettering of international relations, and intercultural relations, and world peace?

*K:* I think that one of the main tasks of every film director and actor is to make such films which reflect the life and spirit of his own people and which help other nations to understand the soul of the people, the spirit of the national life, the truth about everyday life in every country; and such exchange of ideas, of emotions, of course, help all the people, all over the world, to fight for peace, for good relations, for friendship.

*F:* There is universality about art which transcends the boundaries of various countries?

*K:* Yes, yes . . .

*F:* . . . Can you think of any American films you've seen that help the cause of world peace?

*K:* I know a lot of American films which are very interesting from this point of view. Not

only modern American films. I remember best American films which were made during the war and during the first years of the peace time. I think that such cinema directors and actors as Chaplin, Ford, Vidor, Kramer, and many, many others in their best films defend such spirit of good relations, defend human direction in this art, in modern art. And among your modern films, I would like to mention "Marty," which is highly appreciated in our country and by me personally. I consider this film as one of the best; it is very human, emotional, and very truthful.

*F:* It is the story of a butcher in the Bronx.

*K:* Yes. It's very interesting for us because we are ardent defenders of truth in art, of realism in art; that's why I highly appreciate this film.

*F:* Now, what about Stanley Kramer's "On The Beach"? As I understand it, "On The Beach" was shown to a limited audience in Russia. Were you among them?

*K:* No! You are not right! You are wrong.

*F:* Thank you for correcting me. Go ahead, please.

*K:* You see this film was shown not only to special audiences; it was shown in quite a great number of cinema theaters and every spectator could see this film. The showing of this film became an important event in our culture, and political life too, because it's impossible to consider this film only from an artistic or an aesthetic point of view. Perhaps this film is not very strong from this point of view. But the idea of this film, the main conscience of this film, is very important for modern life. I think that this film is a great lesson.

*F:* Yes, it is, and the lesson perhaps is that it doesn't make any difference who started the war. The real point is that everybody gets wiped out in the end. So perhaps the question 'which one was right to start with' may be academic or moot.

*K:* I think that you know our people is a very peaceful people, that we shall not start war.

*F:* I'm very glad to hear that. . . . What do you think of the film "War And Peace"?

*K:* I think that the roles of Natasha and Peter were made in a brilliant way [Audrey Hepburn and Henry Fonda]. It is very good actors' work. And all the film in common is a very honest film.

Of course for American cinema workers, it's not very easy to transfer the very Russian spirit of Tolstoy's novel. Of course there are some mistakes according to the exact understanding of Tolstoy's novel, but still it's very honest trying to transfer the greatest Russian novel and to make it understandable for American audiences.

F: I agree with you. Now, of course, the question that occurs to me is: why haven't the Soviets made a version of *War And Peace*? Before he died, Mike Todd spoke about making one in Russia, and, in 1915, under the Czar, there were two productions; one was called "War And Peace" and the other, "Natasha Rostov." But is there a possibility that Russia will make its own film of *War And Peace*?

K: I hope so. As far as I know, some Russian directors and actors think about making such a Russian film after *War And Peace*. Perhaps you know that we have an opera of *War And Peace* in our Bolshoi Theater, Big Theater.

F: Prokofiev?

K: Yes, yes.

F: Yes, of course. It seems to me that this would be the best version possible. I wonder about some recent Russian films. "Quiet Flows The Don" is an epic film, and I should imagine that with the same money one could film *War And Peace*. . . . In 1915, such films were made as "The Picture of Dorian Gray," the Oscar Wilde book, several films based on Turgenev, several on Dostoyevsky, two on *War And Peace*, one on Dickens. Now, looking in more recent years, I don't find as many classics being filmed in Russia. Would you care to discuss that?

K: Perhaps you don't know about modern films which are based on the motives of classical literary work. I can remind you that some films after Chekhov were made during last two, three years.

F: There is the one with the wonderful golden light in it, filmed in sepia color, about the doctor's wife who was so pretty and stupid. What is that film?

K: "The Grasshopper," "The Gadfly," "Lady With a Pet Dog," and some others. It's very difficult to translate. Then you see we have two films after Dostoyevsky.

F: "White Nights" is one of them, isn't it?

K: "The Idiot" and "White Nights."

F: "The Idiot" is coming, or has come, to

America, under the exchange that we made with the Soviets, and I look forward to seeing it. Is that a good film?

K: I think that "White Nights" is not a very good film. But I like "The Idiot" very much. It's very strong and a very deep film, and very good actors play the main roles in this film.

F: If it makes you feel any better, the "White Nights" made in Italy with Maria Schell—have you seen that?

K: I have seen Maria Schell in several films but I haven't seen this film.

F: "White Nights" played at the San Francisco Festival two years ago, and I thought it was rather boring. But what about "The Idiot"? Have you seen the Gerard Philipe "Idiot," the one made in France?

K: He is quite popular in our country. Many, many films with his roles were shown all over Russia.

F: He was quite friendly to Russia as I understand it.

K: Yes, very popular. I think that from the point of view of popularity he is the most popular among Western actors. Of course, the most popular cinema worker of the West in Russia is Charlie Chaplin.

F: As you know, Chaplin doesn't work in the United States anymore.

K: I know it.

F: And Gerard Philipe never made an American movie.

K: But it's a great pity.

F: For political reasons in both cases. Yes, it is a pity, I agree with you. . . . I wonder about some of the films that Russia is getting from the United States. Although "Marty" and "Roman Holiday" are good pictures, the Russian government also asked for "Beneath the 12-Mile Reef," "Man of a Thousand Faces," "Rhapsody" with Elizabeth Taylor. Those pictures are poor in the United States. I wonder, why would Russian audiences be interested in them?

K: I have seen "Rhapsody," which was shown also with quite great success.

F: In Russia perhaps, not in the United States.

K: Why so?

F: Well, that's a good question, I don't know the answer. I thought it was rather static and pretentious myself, but. . .



K: But was "Marty" popular in the United States?

F: Yes, infinitely so. So much so that Ernest Borgnine became a star and almost a national hero, as the result of it. Marty is Everyman, the common man. When a friend of mine met Borgnine, he said "Thank you for making the story of my life."

K: You see, "Roman Holiday" is also very popular in Russia, an American film. But its popularity is not the same as the popularity of "Marty."

F: I think you could say that it's true of this country too.

K: "Marty" was highly appreciated by all the categories of our spectators, and including intellectuals. Perhaps "Roman Holiday" was popular among average spectators, less than among intellectuals. . . . It's not such a deep film as "Marty." These sorts of films are very funny and light and enjoyable. You laugh while you are seeing them, but after, almost nothing remains in your heart.

F: "Marty" was made, I think, for about \$300,000, which is not very much money by American film budget standards. And "Roman Holiday," which was shot in Italy, cost several millions of dollars.

K: Oh, I see.

F: Now, I hope this won't be an unpleasant question. After the war, while we were making dreadful pictures like "The Iron Curtain," which were distortions, in a way, Russia made its share of films which distorted American life. I'm thinking in particular of a film called "The Russian Question" which was a play, too, and "Secret Mission" in which Americans were depicted as fiends, as spies. What about those pictures?

K: I haven't seen "Iron Curtain" but I was told a lot about it.

F: It was very bad.

K: And I think that this film is one of the attacks in the Cold War.

F: But what about the ones made in Russia?

K: I know "The Russian Question" and I can compare those things which I have seen in this film on the screen and the things which I see now, being in America. I think that in its main features, "Russian Question" is a truthful film because this film was quite objective. This film

in quite a realistic manner, in quite a realistic way, shows the destiny of some newspaperman who tried to speak the truth and who couldn't do it.

F: He loses his wife, loses his job, loses his reputation.

K: Yes. I know of your newspapermen who are very pleasant men and it was my pleasure to speak with one of them. I don't want to call his name.

F: Of course not.

K: But I know one of your famous journalists and critics who was in our country and we had a conversation with him, especially about theatrical problems. He told me his opinion about some performances of our theaters, and I was in agreement with him; but please imagine my surprise, when he returned to the United States and wrote things quite opposite to those which he told me. I think that's one of the problems of the theme of "The Russian Question."

F: That you think American society coerces its writers, its journalists . . .

K: Not American society, but in American society there are such persons, such editors, who try to press the journalists to make them write only those things which they wish, the editors wish.

F: And which, in turn, I should imagine would support the Capitalist system . . .

K: Of course.

F: Now, to get on neutral ground let's look at Sweden. What do you think of the work of Ingmar Bergman?

K: It is very difficult for me to answer your question because I haven't yet seen his films. I was invited sometimes to see his films, but I am very busy in Moscow. That's why it's impossible for me to see all the films which are shown in our cinema workers' club, and in our writers' club . . . I would like to mention one of the modern films which I have seen just before my departure from the Soviet Union. It is "Savage Eye."

F: Splendid, fine.

K: You know this film?

F: Yes, I've seen it recently.

K: How do you consider, how do you regard this film?

F: I lived in Los Angeles for a year-and-a-half and I think "Savage Eye" is an accurate pic-

ture of life in Los Angeles for a lonely and desperate woman . . . What did you think?

K: It's quite strong film from an artistic point of view. It's good done, but the spirit of this film, I dislike, to be sincere.

F: Why is that?

K: I am an optimist in my view on life. I like those films which help to believe in human beings, in life, in the future. Such films as "Savage Eye" spread desperate moods.

F: But many Americans, and many Russians too, I bet, do live in desperate moods, Mr. Karaganov. The film has a happy ending. Perhaps the ending doesn't belong on the film. The woman regains her health and manages to live with some sort of peace and serenity. She comes to identify with some young lovers on the beach.

K: But please imagine if you every week see such films, it is very difficult to live; it's very difficult to remain the man of optimistical mood, after seeing such films. That's why I don't like that film.

F: Sure, but you were the gentleman who said you believe in realism. Now, "Savage Eye" is a realistic film if it's nothing else.

K: But, in everyday life there are not only desperate men and women, not only dark things, but also we have many light things, exciting things, in all spheres of our life.

F: You wouldn't want films with Betty Grable to be shown exclusively, musical comedies, Marilyn Monroe movies, which distort life. I was thinking about Russian comedies. I remember seeing some years ago "Volga Volga" which was a laugh riot, very funny. Are such films being made in Russia now?

K: Yes. I can remind you: "Carnival Night." I think it's possible to translate it in such a way. It's a musical comedy. Such films are very popular in our country, but it's our pity that our cinema directors make quite small numbers of such films. We Soviet critics try to do our best to make them more often make such films.

F: Do you like American musical comedy?

K: Of course I like.

F: Do you like Marilyn Monroe, for instance?

K: Yes!

F: I think as a comedienne, she's quite funny.

K: Yes!

F: What about some of the plans for Russian

film-making in the next few years? How do you see the film situation taking shape in your country? What sort of pictures will be made?

K: Now we make quite enough films from the point of view of number of films.

F: More than the United States does, yes.

K: We make 115, 120 films every year. Perhaps during the next two years we shan't increase the number of films. Our main task is to make more good films.

F: Like "The Cranes Are Flying," a film greatly admired in the United States.

K: Yes, but still we have plans also to increase the number in the perspectives of our plans for seven, six, eight years.

F: Is the movie industry situated largely in Moscow? Mosfilms produces there. What about the other sixteen studios or so, where do they produce?

K: We have main studios in Moscow and Leningrad. Mosfilms in Moscow, then the studio of Gorky, in Moscow, too—I don't include the studios of documentary films, scientific films, and so on. Then, there is a very good studio in Leningrad, Lenfilms. Then you know that our country consists of fifteen national republics.

F: Yes.

K: And practically every republic now has its own studio: Ukrainian, Byelorussian, Georgian, Armenian; Uzbekistan has its own studio, and so on. And all the studios make films according to the national traditions of their people.

F: . . . What do you think, finally, about the idea of cultural exchange? For instance, if you would send the charming leading lady of "Ballad of a Soldier" [Zhanna Prokhorenko] to Hollywood, she'd be a smash. And what do you think of the possibilities of exchanging artists between the United States and Russia? Having, say, Audrey Hepburn make a film in Russia, and Zhanna Prokhorenko make a film in the United States? Do you think that would be useful?

K: We had such an experience not with Americans, but with French actors. Perhaps you know that a year, or two years ago, "Normandie-Nieman" was made, a cooperative film, a Franco-Soviet production. This film was about pilots, French pilots, who took part in the battle with fascists, being in our country,

and their history, how they became pilots, how they left France or Egypt, those places where they were living and how they became members of these escadrilles in Russia. And this film shows the battles in the air, their personal features, characters, relations between French and Russian fliers, and so on.

F: Was this a successful film?

K: This film had a great success in our country, and in France too. All the roles of French pilots were acted by French actors, all the roles of Russian pilots and Russian officers were played by Russian actors.

F: Now, in the new Rossellini film, "That in Rome," the Russian soldier is played by a distinguished Russian artist, the actor who was Othello in the recent Soviet film.

K: Yes, Sergei Bondarchuk.

F: This is another example of intercultural exchange.

K: I think that such exchange will develop, and, as far as our relations will be better, I think the form of exchange will be more active.

F: Let's hope that exchanges develop in many areas, and for many years to come.



*A graduate of Columbia College, Herbert Feinstein is a young West Coast film critic. His essays and reviews have appeared in Film Quarterly, the American Scholar, The Reporter, and elsewhere. He teaches on the art and history of films at San Francisco State College and is, as well, a practicing lawyer.*

## FROM A JAPANESE JOURNAL

by JOHN TAGLIABUE

NOTES: 1. *Mushi* means insect in Japanese  
2. Chuang-tzu says the perfect man knows the "ancestor" of all things.

A green mushi  
like a hysterical acrobat  
or like a Chinese juggler of light  
rolled quickly over my book of Dante  
hid under its cover  
and as I write this  
trying to uncover its beauty  
the green acrobat flies away  
with his divine comedy.

The ancestor of all things  
such as the stone  
or flea  
is also the baby  
of all things such  
as the moon  
or a singing  
sleeping baby  
or an awake  
reader in love.

The inside of a slender bamboo tree,  
how mathematical! the inside of a poem,  
measureless music.

*John Tagliabue spent two years in Japan as a Fulbright Scholar. He has published one volume, Poems (Harper), and now teaches at Bates College in Maine. He was graduated from Columbia College in 1944.*

# BEFORE THE HOUSE

## FREEDOM: FUN & GAMES

**JAMES AND ANNETTE BAXTER**

On 205 acres of northeastern Bronx swampland, a tract embraced by two doubly-intersecting highways, there has arisen a combination funland and history lesson that has been christened by some entrepreneur-educators Freedomland. Laid out in a rough approximation of the physical contours of the United States, Freedomland consists of separate areas, Little Old New York, Chicago, The Great Plains, San Francisco, and several others, each more or less in its corresponding location in the United States, and each providing in a movie-set format spectacles and rides that are intended to wed the stirring story of America and its freedoms to the thrills of an amusement park.

Ballyhooed at its opening in June 1960 by a twenty-page special section of *The New York Times* as "the world's largest showplace," Freedomland emerged in the customary rash of statistics. Sixty-five million dollars had been spent in fabricating the miniature mountain ranges, towns, roads, and eight miles of waterways, and in furnishing them with either 15,000 or 50,000 (both figures were cited) individual trees and plants. Three thousand permanent employees, 2,000 of them appropriately costumed, still leave room for 32,000 simultaneous visitors (up to 90,000 a day), who can hourly be served 50,000 hamburgers, hot dogs, etc., in eighteen restaurants and snack bars.

It all adds up to The East's Answer to Disneyland, and some of the promoters offering the Answer had a hand in fashioning the original West Coast Challenge. Freedomland is more enormous (eighty-five built-up acres to Disneyland's sixty-five), more expensive, more various, and furthermore, it has a message. In the East, far from the fostering penumbra of Hollywood, it would obviously not have done simply to imitate the original. What was needed was what used to be referred to in advertising circles as a gimmick, and in the geographical-

ideological formula of America as Freedomland, the gimmick was found. The assumption, presumably, was that the expected five million yearly visitors would encounter not only tangible chunks of the American past but enlightenment about the American heritage of freedom as well. After two years of conceiving and three hundred days of frenzied labor, Freedomland was delivered on schedule.

The mammoth parking lot (7,200 cars) opens, symbolically, into Little Old New York, where the visitor is confronted with narrow streets, horse-drawn cars, and facsimiles of store-fronts and street lamps. In adjacent Chicago the much-publicized fire actually does occur every hour or so when the gas jets are turned up, and volunteers are permitted to participate in its extinguishing to the extent of holding on to one of the two hoses played at the blaze by the pseudo-firemen while the jets are turned down again. A "correspondents' wagon" offers a ride between the corpse-strewn lines of the Civil War; a paddle-wheel steamboat cruises about the miniature Great Lakes; and so on, through The Great Plains, the Old Southwest, the San Francisco of 1906, the Northwest Fur Trapping Country, the New Orleans Mardi Gras, and finally Satellite City, a nod at Cape Canaveral.

Perhaps it was prophetic that Freedomland's midwives found themselves forced by local geographic necessity, i.e., the embracing superhighways, to re-orient the map of the United States by rotating it 90 degrees counterclockwise. Thus the sun sets, when you're in the cock-eyed Great Plains, not over San Francisco, but over Chicago. Some more insidious necessity, if that is the word for it, has put a twist at least as decisive in whatever genuine intention there may have been to render a suggestion of America's past or life or ideals.

The intention itself has been clearly proclaimed: "You will be Johnny-on-the-spot as the great stories of America are reborn." But when Johnny (presumably all this is addressed to children . . .) finds himself on the spot, do the "background settings, costumes, modes of transportation, nostalgic bits of one nation's life . . . and all authentic" give him a sense of the differences between him and the citizens of old New York or the Barbary Coast? Since a nostalgic bit of New York bears the familiar emblems of R.H. Macy and A.S. Beck, Johnny recognizes less the authentic past than the cozy purloins of Herald Square 1961. Even the anomalous presence of a Greenwich Village leather shop, with its array of hand-tooled bags, fails of conviction: like its flashiest counter-

*James and Annette Baxter attended Columbia University in the 1940's. Mrs. Baxter is an associate in history at Barnard College and the author of Henry Miller: Expatriate (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1961). Dr. Baxter is a psychiatrist and teaches at the Cornell Medical College.*



parts on MacDougal Street, the Freedomland Village Shop is geared to the tourist, but it lacks MacDougal Street's dutiful avowal of bohemian origins—one or two specimens of bearded intensity behind the counter. Little Old New York, far from being the locale of the Zenger case or the old Brevoort, turns out only to be missing Ohrbach's. San Francisco obeys New York in its blank-faced presentness: the Chinese ceremonial dancers are usually far outnumbered by a retinue of blue-jeaned kibitzers. Together, all that they and the neighboring vendors of tawdry Chinatown gewgaws succeed in conveying is something aimless and flaccid, a bogus nightmare out of an oriental Céline.

The trip through the San Francisco Earthquake (it and the other indoor "dark rides" are simply variations on the old Tunnel of Love, with a labyrinth of tracks and some banging doors at start and finish) strikes the note of natural disaster that resounds throughout Freedomland. The Tornado Adventure, the Chicago Fire, and the falling tree and grizzly bears that harass the Northwest Fur Trappers all make of American history an idiotic obstacle course, with freedom its least recognizable goal. An entirely recognizable goal of the designers, on the other hand, has been the visitor's participation in the obstacle course. They apparently felt that "the experience of America" would thereby come more alive. This fallacy is illustrated by the Midwestern Tornado, which offers a variety of debris supposedly spinning through the air—a cow, a car, and an elderly couple in bed. And there is tornado-like noise—but no wind. More crucially, there is no suggestion that a Midwestern tornado is the agent of death and destruction and tragedy. At Freedomland, the tornado is scarcely frightening; it has been transformed into clean, wholesome, predictable fun.

Indeed the Phenomenon of the Emasculated Catastrophe is one of the profounder misrepresentations at Freedomland. The fire, the earthquake and the other natural disasters have all had the sting removed, and what could today's citizenry wish more to be persuaded of than that forces of enormous destructiveness are not to be taken at all seriously? Like little children, holding each other's hands, and on the grass, "all fall down"—but it's clean, wholesome, predictable fun.

Apparently the Founding Fathers of Freedomland persuaded themselves that once the birth of their nation had been proclaimed in subway ads, advance newspaper supplements, and suburban billboards, any need for a Constitution would be met by the rule that if enough excitement is generated, freedom will result. Political theory discloses no precedent for this vigorous formula, and perhaps we may agree that it bears no relation whatever to the history of America as lived by its people. Freedom was in fact more often promoted by intelligent compromise than by senseless violence. Examples of peaceful planning and judicious resolution of conflict abound in our history, and Americans today might more profitably be reminded of these than of pirate hangings and Western gunfights. The former do not, of course, accommodate themselves so easily as the latter to the simplistic drama rampant at Freedomland. But even a moderately endowed imagination could extract more

substantial drama, without sacrificing comprehension or appeal, from two themes central to our freedom and altogether missing from Freedomland: peaceful co-existence (European immigration to America and democratic self-government) and American distinctiveness (the modification of European culture to the uses of a new, yet related, society). These are, after all, not just our dominant achievements as a civilization, they remain the ideals we invoke when we celebrate the freedom to which they are linked by the facts of history.

But perhaps it is naive to expect a project whose sponsors boast that its cost equalled "22 star-studded movies, 130 hour-long TV spectaculars, 195 Broadway plays" to be concerned with historical facts, much less with the achievements and ideals that animate our national ethos, since these are available for the modest cost of a ride to the public library. When Freedomland's proprietors detail the awesome scale of their expenditures, we are encouraged to expect more than books or monuments or memories offer. What we get is considerably less. History ravaged by fifth-rate vaudeville affords neither entertainment nor instruction—merely the depressing opportunity to participate in organized cultural betrayal.

In contrast to the unconcern of the promoters for the alleged essence of their spectacle is the fervor with which they have gone about insuring physical and mental solace to the sojourner in Freedomland. Their solicitude ranges from the expected basics: a plethora of rest rooms and snack bars, frequent signs and orientation maps, a central station for lost babies—to the forthrightly gratuitous: special vehicles for transportation across the parking lot to the entrance gates, "Picture Spots" designated by Kodak to assist the uncertain in aiming their cameras, and even a free Diaper Changing Service masterminded by Consolidated Laundries.

Surfeited with such conveniences, the visitor may fail to ask himself what in this "authentic recreation of our country's exciting past and of the challenging frontiers that lie ahead in time and space" has been omitted. Little or no mention is made of the colonial period, no Pilgrims or Puritans; no mention, for that matter, of the religious or ethnic strains that went into making America—save for the Chinese in San Francisco. Nothing of Philadelphia or Virginia or Washington, D. C., places where the notion of freedom has at times been taken quite seriously. Except for the plastic figures of Grant and Lee terminating the Civil War, and Elsie the Cow, America is devoid of notable public figures. The Civil War goes by of course with no allusion to secession or slavery and, lest the carnage and blasting cannon intrude on our good humor ("Enjoy the Civil War—Free!"), the costumed conductor of the "correspondents' wagon" makes a series of lame little witticisms. Furthermore, America's cultural past seems never to have existed. A Dixieland band is there, but what of the visual arts, of literature, of the press, the lyceums, the Chautauquas? Surely the "41 separate, simultaneous spectacles rolled into one" eulogized in the Complete Official Guide could have sacrificed some of their acreage to what has been more enduringly spectacular.

In fact, one of the most lamentable deficiencies is in the southwest corner: the section representing Southern California really ought to have been devoted to a reproduction of Disneyland, erected, please, by those who did the original. A comparison of the two great fun parks is like that between your neighbor's movies of his children, giggling and waving and out of focus, and the 1938 *Snow White*. Disneyland has the old master's touch, slick, confident and professional, and the distinction of fantasy from phoniness is there somehow observed.

But the most flagrant omission from Freedomland's map is Madison Avenue. While the commercialism of an amusement park is generally taken for granted, that of Freedomland reaches an apogee of candor and aggressiveness. Almost every store front, silo and factory from New York to San Francisco is emblazoned with a commercial signature reminding us to buy its service or product after we've left Freedomland—or, better, right on the spot. For behind the quaint facade, beside the old-timey lamp post, Macy and Kodak and a dozen others have marketing interiors cluttered with a minimum of anachronistic nonsense and a maximum of salable 1961 merchandise. What we are to take for granted is that America reproduced in miniature is America flagrantly advertising specific business commodities. Not initiative, or free enterprise, or healthy competition, but Borden's, Continental Casualty Insurance, and Schaefer Beer. Intending, perhaps, to soften this onslaught, or perhaps simply brazening it through, the authors of *The New York Times*' special section proclaimed in one of its articles: "American industry, too, gets into the act at Freedomland, presenting highlights of how American trade and commerce have contributed to the progress of the nation. In all, fifty leading firms, a cross-section of American industry, have created unique commercial 'theaters' which are spotted throughout the face of the park. The objective: to choose those representing important themes in the history of US development." These representative industries include Chun King Sales (Chinese food), Hallmark Cards, Scripto, Welch's Grape Juice and the Frito Company. The hard sell becomes adamant when the visitor to Satellite City (he has to visit Satellite City to get from New Orleans back to Little Old New York and on to the parking lot, unless he wants to retrace his steps over the Old Southwest, the Great Plains, and Chicago) finds that the pathway traversing the City leads him relentlessly through exhibitions of Benjamin Moore paints, Chrysler Corporation's air conditioning, and Coca-Cola. (Braniff Airlines bailed out of the Trip to the Moon for the 1961 season.) There seems to be no other way to cross Satellite City than by trudging through these serpentine displays, unless you vault a fence or dive in a pool and swim for it. Crammed among the ads are a few concessions to the space age: one wall of the American Oil Company building, for example, has been turned into a flashing-light panel that imitates the headboard of an enormous pinball machine. Push a button and a trail of blinks shows where your rocket goes. The concept is so puerile, the distortions of astronomy are so outrageous, that any eighth-grade general science student will be offended.

And yet, in the midst of the blaring commercialism the ugly thought obtrudes: perhaps this is what America has become. While the small fry may disdain the scientific inanities of Satellite City, chances are that all the advertising will make them feel, even removed from their TV sets, right back in their own livingroom. For in this festival of un-history and non-culture, small fry and large are apt to fall into the spirit of things and allow themselves to absorb indiscriminately the advertising and hokum along with the snacks and fresh diapers. The quest for American history, if it ever existed, has been successfully deflected to the quest for another Coke at the Spaceport Refreshment Center.

Not only historical substance but historical reason has been flouted. The powers behind Freedomland are apparently convinced that gate receipts will in the long run be measured in inverse ratio to historical exegesis, and apart from a routine reference to Mrs. O'Leary's cow at the entrance to "Chicago: 1871", the most elementary reasons for everything are missing. Promises of multitudinous educational rewards are strewn throughout the guides and circulars, but it would take more than the tenacity of a Northwest Fur Trapper to discover them.

Not that the past absolutely had to be recreated in the spirit of Parkman or re-examined in the spirit of Turner, but, in a last-ditch effort to attribute some ancillary motive to cold cash, one might hope that Freedomland's creators would have entertained a purpose vaguely akin to Bancroft's—to romanticize the land and the triumphs of democracy, while remaining moderately faithful to facts and realities. Putting aside, charitably, any search for facts and realities at Freedomland, one might be swayed romantically by the Baychester section of the Bronx itself. The skies and vistas, majestically surveyed at early evening from the Santa Fe as it steams across Chicago, the Great Lakes, the Great Plains and the Southwest, would, in a more tranquil atmosphere, be lovely if not breathtaking. In the near pandemonium of the Freedomland free-for-all, a stunning mauve sunset hasn't a chance. True, the blasted ante-bellum columns outside the Civil War are a brave attempt at poetic exploitation. Planted beside a popcorn stand, however, their symbolism is wholly lost, and they contribute to the saga of freedom about as effectively as their neighbor, Danny the (electromagnetic) Dragon.

Freedomland's failures to be, or to explain, the real America are after all understandable failures. The union between fun and edification was a shotgun marriage to begin with, and its issue was destined to bear the defects of incompatibility. Another product of the misalliance, the big-money quiz shows, recently went to a gruesome and painful demise, revealing at autopsy that its disease was congenital, intrinsic to its being. But this blurring of the difference between education and amusement is symptomatic of our current national reluctance to concede any differences whatever—in religious traditions, in political philosophies—in the products of mass culture. Freedomland is an end result of such reluctance, itself a confession of growing distrust in our ability to sustain differences and through them to mature as a people.

Perhaps an amusement park ought to be just an amusement park, without risking the reciprocal degradation that can easily follow if it pretends to be an indoctrination course as well. A troubled national consciousness has led us to inject ideology into corners of our life that hitherto have been confidently free of it. Are we, then, like those Red Chinese factory workers, to be forever festooning our lives with slogans?

Thus, in its spurious amalgam of fun and history, Freedomland constitutes the modern amusement park—modern in E. M. Forster's sense of managing to tell a new sort of lie. But it's also the Emperor's New Sixty-five Million Dollar Clothes, spotted as such by a small boy who was overheard as he emerged, pulled by his mother, from one of the thrilling spectacles. "That thing wasn't true!" he shouted up at her. And she answered him with "Waddayuh mean that thing wasn't true?"

## THE MODERN PAINTING

### AN EXCHANGE

Mr. Edgar Levy's lush diatribe against "a form of painting which is avowedly about nothing" suffers from the usual weaknesses of the criticism of artists, who, because they do not understand or take part in the dominant creative movements of their time, react to them with bitterness, misunderstanding and unqualified abuse. His attack is so generalized it is meaningless, just as his evocations of the past sacrifice sense to sound. (What is this "candle" which El Greco holds in the Spanish gloom, other than part of an over-extended image which manages to lump the Impressionists, Van Gogh, El Greco, Vermeer, and Cézanne?) A quick count shows that at least twenty-five great artists are mentioned in Mr. Levy's article but only three of the painters he is presumably attacking: Mondrian, Pollock and de Kooning. If the author feels it is reasonable to discuss Pollock and Mondrian as if their styles were one, it is obviously impossible to argue about the relative merits of Motherwell, Guston, Hoffman or Heliker, all of whom have developed extremely distinctive styles over long, dedicated careers. It is [on the other hand] quite possible to recognize that most contemporary abstract painters are not geniuses without concluding that there are no geniuses painting abstract works. Mr. Levy will undoubtedly not agree. Not only has he decided that all abstract work is bad—I would say Abstract Expressionism, the usual victim of Mr. Levy's kind of vehemence, except that he apparently does not limit his attack to this school—he 'proves' this by a variety of invidious arguments . . .

Mr. Levy begins by implying that any painter whose work is "non-objective" has been enticed to "produce articles of commerce instead of works of art" and that he is painting "only the stereotypes that may reap . . . extravagant rewards." Thus, he is able to discount most of the important painters of today by dis-

counting their integrity. A painter's capacity to make money is hardly relevant to his abilities. If it were proved that all abstract painters hated money, it would no more prove that they were good painters than El Greco or Rubens' enormous success proved they were bad painters. But of course the question of money is raised by Mr. Levy, not as a serious critical point, but merely to create the impression that paintings are now a commodity like the tulip bulbs he mentions. Like so many critics of abstract art, he seems more interested in the commerce of art than in art itself, unless art becomes "adorable" by being around long enough to be acceptable . . .

Mr. Levy is free to paint as he wishes, and no one can contest his privilege to dislike abstract art. However, if he wants to become a critic of it, he should attempt to free himself of his special and not very interesting prejudices. To begin with, he might assume that young painters today like abstract paintings for reasons other than greed; he might try to understand why Abstract Expressionism is the first native American movement with international influence, and above all, he must learn to eschew "beautiful" prose.

JAMES T. MCCARTIN  
1951 B. A., Columbia College  
Brooklyn, New York

Abstract painting, which Edgar Levy scorns, is not my means of plastic expression, nor is it in my line of esthetic country, but I will defend it against any academic who shakes at it his classical umbrella. Mr. Levy is "deeply concerned" about the 'nothingness' of 'abstract' art "from Mondrian through Jackson Pollock and de Kooning to the new discovery . . ." Innovations in art and science have irked academic and moralistic intellectuals before. The reformation heaped maledictions on any new art image of man; Rousseau, Tolstoy, Marx, and scores of contemporary academics have attacked "imagination" in art as an enemy of the rational intellect. [But] dogma has never succeeded in arresting the creative artist and the basic scientist's search for the fresher detail of Nature. Mr. Levy's "Notes Toward a Program for Painting" reads like a litany . . . Artists, teachers and students in this University are asking whether or not he is aware that quantum physics is widening and extending our psychological, biological and philosophical understanding of Platonic, Euclidian, and Cartesian measurements of nature.

Ever since mankind's first teacher, the cave painter, invented the outline as a visual means to "capture" the image of Nature, contours and spaces have been the major preoccupations of the painter. Ancient dogmas used heavy contours to incarcerate the image of man. Leonardo invented a technique, *sfumato*, to liberate it. Mr. Levy is astonished at the sum of money 'abstract' painters and their imitators get for their "unpainted paintings." After Leonardo's invention and until recently thousands of hack painters in the western world commanded huge sums for painting vacuous smiles and "adorable" faces. Yet their very activity helped to perpetuate Leonardo's liberated image.



The arts and sciences have always expressed themselves in action, not in intellectual contemplation. Action nourishes the spirit of revolt. Innovations in art or science are messengers of revolt against false images of man's nature.

The cosmos is not lazy or impenetrable, but the classical eye and mind have been for a very, very long time.

Haven't you noticed, painter Levy, how much easier it is now to "see into the purple"? Vision blurs only when scholars corrupt plastic metaphors into "ambiguous meanings."

PEPPINO MANGRAVITE  
Program in the Arts  
Columbia University

... Mr. Levy's frame of reference is as foreign to the biological compulsions and convictions of creative painters of all ages as are the categories of Immanuel Kant.

"In painting the drawing is the essential, in which the foundation of taste lies not in what gratifies in sensation, but in that which pleases by its form. The colours which illuminate the drawing belong to sensuous stimuli and may bring the object more vividly before the senses, but do not render it worthy of contemplation as a thing of beauty; they are, moreover, often limited by exigencies of the beautiful form, and even where their sensuous stimulus is legitimate, they are ennobled only by the beautiful form. (*Kritik d. Urtheilskraft*)

Not only does Kant's language presume that drawing, form and beauty are universally understood terms, but his whole aesthetic emphasis is rooted in transcendental conceptional values rather than in an identification with the creative process. Concerning Kant's aesthetics Benedetto Croce says, "These cautious words, used to conceal his thoughts, do not hide his tendency to mysticism. A mysticism without conviction or enthusiasm, almost in spite of himself . . . His inadequate grasp of aesthetic activity led him to see double, even triple, and caused the unnecessary multiplication of his explanatory principles. Although he was always ignorant of the genuine nature of the aesthetic activity, he was indebted to it for suggesting to him the pure categories of space and time as the Transcendental Aesthetic . . ." (*Aesthetic*)

One could hardly dignify Mr. Levy's ideas with the term 'Transcendental Aesthetic', for he has reduced the floodtide of German speculation to a shallow puddle. To Mr. Levy, the one basic prerequisite for a painting is that in some way or other the final, brush-stroked, framed picture must disclose the natural or man-made object which "stimulated" the artist. By at no time coming face to face with the "aesthetic activity" of Impressionism, which he adores until it "dissolved into a gorgeous spectrum," or of Cubism, which he dismisses with, "its analyses of solid reality are tantalizingly promising," or of Surrealism, which he sums up in, "on the contrary, the more out of place the more welcome the guest," or of the works of his favorite painters, Velázquez, Chardin and Corot, which he glorifies as interpretations of period tastes and moods, Mr. Levy confesses how unprepared he is in the medium of

criticism or of historical interpretation to evaluate contemporary painting.

J. M. Guyau, another neo-platonic critic, of the nineteenth century, like Mr. Levy, finds no better way to dismiss non-acceptable art than through general invectives: "Decadents and degenerates deprive art of its socially sympathetic aim by setting aesthetic sympathy at war against human sympathy." (*Les Problèmes de l'esthétique contemporaine*, 1884). And this vituperation was aimed at the very Impressionists to whom Mr. Levy refers as "an earnest group of men . . . one of the loveliest schools of painting." Another aesthete of the nineteenth century, Max Nordau, gives art the task of re-establishing the wholeness of life amongst the fragmentary specialization characteristic of industrial society. He asserts that art for art's sake, art as simple expression of internal states, of the objectification of the artist's feelings, no doubt exists, but is merely "the art of Quaternary man, the art of the cave dweller." (*Social Function of Art*, 1897)

In reply to Mr. Levy's statements that "formal beauty, early recognized by Plato and Aristotle, is art's concession and its debt to systematic thought, for its basis is mathematical" and that "the 'golden section' of Classic times, the triangular composition used in the Renaissance . . . show . . . a preoccupation with formal principles by which elements are assembled for aesthetic effect," I can do no better than quote again from Croce:

Whole volumes have been composed on the laws of beauty, on the golden section and [on] undulating and serpentine line. These should in our opinion be looked upon as the astrology of aesthetics—not one of such definitions satisfies either the hearer or the constructor of it. For a moment later he finds himself before a new instance [by] which he recognizes that his definition is more or less insufficient, ill-adopted and in need of re-touching . . . It must not be forgotten that the very men who made use of these terms could scarcely grope after ideas they suggested without falling back into old traditions, the only ones on which they had an intellectual grasp. To them the new words were shades, not bodies. When they tried to embrace them, their arms returned empty to their own breasts.

The very phrase "program for painting" is in antithesis to the dynamics of biological and cultural needs reflected in creative experiences. A valid aesthetic critique of the painting of this period can only ripen out of an evolving language nurtured by the same ingredients that have nourished and produced the symbol makers of our time. Such terms as expression, communication, form, technique, reality, along with others employed to discover the nature of art, have to be challenged and their meaning restated in terms germane to immediate scientific and personally experienced initiatives.

Rainer Maria Rilke gives a fine description of the emergence of meaning out of the act of creating. The year following the completion of his *Sonnets to Orpheus*, the poet



writes, "Even I am just beginning to penetrate more and more into the spirit of sending, for such the *Sonnets* appear to be. As for their comprehensibility, I am now fully able to impart these poems accurately in reading them aloud. I was extremely absorbed and gratified recently in testing this out—and where some obscurity remains it is of the sort that demands not clearing-up but subjection." And Malraux, in his *Saturn: An Essay on Goya*, states, "He was not delirious and he was still a portrait painter; and he was the first artist to have a presentiment of a kind of painting which accepts no laws but the law of its own foreseeable development. This is what our contemporaries call PAINTING; a painting which discovers its own individual law, a law which many great painters had suspected but which none had dared to proclaim—the pre-eminence of the resources peculiar to painting over those of representation; the right to draw and paint not to achieve an illusion or to express a spectacle in the strongest possible way, but so as to express painting itself."

Cézanne's paintings illumined beyond the spoken aesthetic intentions of the artist. In seeking to "make something permanent out of Impressionism, like the works of the old masters," he adventured his medium to points beyond his own recognition and often his paintings were rejected by himself; a friend's presence saved the "Card Players" from being destroyed, because he could not identify the impact of his canvas and paint with the esoteric concept that demanded an unpredictable materialization. When, however, driven by intuitive directives, "a sending," Cézanne spontaneously drew at hand a black circle on a white canvas and put a cadmium red dab in the center of it as a final statement of an orange, he had, without full apprehension, extended spatial implicitness from impressionistic-suggested three dimensional form to potential or emerging form—an abstraction: *abstrahere*: to draw from.

Cubism was more than an attempt to push Cézanne's stated aesthetics to a logical conclusion because the Cubists, guided by a preconception of desired results, freed themselves from Cézanne's traditional way of viewing nature from a fixed spatial position in a specific moment of time. Cubism, in part, was an endeavor to reestablish three-dimensional form, lost by Monet, but the Cubists replaced the representational image of an object seen from a static position at an appointed time by a composite image of selectively organized relationships of form and light: relative aesthetics.

It was the Abstractionism of Cézanne that opened for artists a vision of space itself as a motif for painting—Non-Objectivism. Kandinsky's non-objectivity was interwoven with Expressionism, which emphasized the subjective emotional response of the painter and the occidental mysticism of theosophy. Mondrian, in contrast to the Expressionists, sought to present classical spatial laws free of traditional naturalistic crutches. Several artists of the Bauhaus School, through the analysis and objectification of the results of Expressionism, Cubism and Non-Objective painting, became more conscious of plastic media as self-generating forces for opening inexhaustible tactile, spatial and interpretive discoveries. These men sought to rid paint and canvas of any preconcep-

tions concerning their function, either as a means for self-expression or as a touchstone for the disclosing of absolute laws. Medium became the stimulus to evoke the potential sensory and imaginative attributes of man: existential aesthetics.

Contemporary artists accept their media freed from traditional musts, permitting unhampered spatial discoveries, with conscious awareness of the work done by their immediate predecessors, as the Baroque artists happily received from the men of the Renaissance, whose ideological efforts broke Gothic formulas, an extended atmosphere in which to project their surging mobility with open assurance. Our artists respond and transform at a moment when on the basis of mountains of data, all sciences concerned with man and his cultures are emphasizing the uncharted potentials of human formative power, when titanic social and economic forces are casting life into stupendous dramas, the final acts of which, though unpredictable, suggest stage-sets vaster and more compelling than any known performance permits us to envision, when races are no longer simply classified as superior or inferior as they struggle for national and international self-images, and when theoretical physicists, armed with fantastic mathematical signs, face the undefinable element of a chance factor in the 'nature of things.'

The painters who are important today are so not because they are painting non-representationally but because they, as gifted artists of every culture, with new insight and profundity, are molding for themselves and us in spatial convictions emerging human possibilities. Historically and intrinsically, the non-representational compulsion is obviously the most valid contemporary directive through which to forge with power and integrity appropriate creative symbols that express the aesthetic challenge and promise of our turgent humanity and space-time universe. Material intimations no longer stir or interpret us . . . Critics must move into new categories of language to grow into a maturer consciousness and sensitivity with which to appraise our art forms, if appraise they must. Mr. Levy's trite admonitions fall like melting snow on our glowing path toward new visual illuminations.

MAX BERND-COHEN  
1920 B. A., Columbia College  
1922 LL.B., Law  
Englewood, Florida

*Edgar Levy writes:*

I am disappointed that my article has called forth no more stimulating opposition than the usual stale defenses of non-objective painting: that it is a new, young, American art; that it is the art of rebellion against false images; that it is the art that generates itself, the art of existentialism.

Mr. McCartin wants me "above all" to mend my prose rather than my arguments. Since my venture in the first is amateur and my concern with the second proceeds from my profession I have not time to take his advice. He, like my other critics, thinks that my essay was an attack on non-objective art. But that was the least of it. I should have preferred not to have mentioned it at all;

it is something I passed thirty-odd years ago when it performed for me the useful function Professor Mangravite describes so originally as "nourishing the spirit of revolt." It was in precisely the cause Mr. McCartin and Mr. Mangravite seem to have in mind that I wrote. I want very much for my adorable (why does that word annoy them?) art of painting to flourish, not to bog down in decoration, boredom, solipsism or commercialism. (As for the last, see Professor Lester D. Longman's letter to *The New York Times*, April 30, 1961.) Therefore I proposed so tentatively that I added the words, 'Notes Toward' to my title "A Program for Painting." On the details of this program, I am highly vulnerable. But any assault on the proposals themselves might have been most welcome, not only because it might have corrected errors or misconceptions but also for new ideas it might have engendered.

Mr. Bernd-Cohen, too, pays no attention to my proposals but brings up heavy artillery in the form of passages from Croce, Rilke, Malraux, with which to bombard my position. (He deposits Kant, with a beanshooter, on my side.) Against these distant critics I do not wish to defend myself especially since the quotations given do not make it appear they were gunning for me.

Aside from this, Mr. Bernd-Cohen seems to have read me a bit more carelessly than I deserved. I did not "dismiss" Cubism until I used up as much space as the editor would let me have, and I expressed my feeling for it by calling it the "major art style of our own time." But it was in a special context that I mentioned it. That was in its relation to the problem of plasticity. Its work in replacing the image seen from a fixed spatial position with one composite of its parts without regard to the limiting requirements of any projectivity was, contrary to Mr. Bernd-Cohen's statement, implicit in Cézanne. That is all there is specific to Cubism and it is to be understood in two ways. One is technical and has to do with a new ordering of space; it was that aspect of Cubism to which I referred in my essay. The other is an almost diagrammatic exposition of the way the imagination refashions elements of reality into new and felicitous relationships. That aspect I could not discuss in an article outlining a painting program. I should like to discuss the point in a discussion of the creative process itself. But what is "relative aesthetics," Mr. Bernd-Cohen?

Mr. Bernd-Cohen also makes an unjustified assumption that my "favorite" painters are Velázquez, Chardin, and Corot. I needed ready examples, these were good men, and I used them and, according to Mr. McCartin, twenty-two others. I do not really know if I have favorites among painters. I protest that it is unfair to try to label me thus casually.

Again, my remarks about the golden section, etc., were to provide evidence of interest in what I believe underlies the formal beauty of anything—paintings included—and were not designed as directions for making pictures. Did Mr. Bernd-Cohen neglect to read "... the painter ... will hold to the geometry that underlies all orderliness intuitively and without burdening himself with conventions he does not understand"?

But it seems to me that the weight of Mr. Bernd-

Cohen's case for non-objective art is dumped onto that sentence toward the end of his letter: "Material intimations no longer stir or interpret us." If he is taking into account the vast extension of what is material that he himself indicates in space, time, substance and function, he is clearly wrong. If he means that we should concern ourselves with the metaphysical, no wonder he lost me along the way.

## AD HOMINEM

### DOBZHANSKY, BURTON, & CORT

How very right is David Cort that one should know what one is talking (or writing) about. ["On Lying"; Spring 1961] But how strange that that righteous thought occurs in the sentence: "When I read writers who say that the center of the earth is solid, or that all men are a single species, or that the moon would be a good place for a rocket station, for example, I know that these people cannot possibly know what they are talking about; I begin to wonder why they are lying to me; and usually I can think of a good reason." There have been a few (fortunately only a few) people who said that there are several living species of man. And I am sure that Mr. Cort will be astonished to know that it is usually not difficult to think of a bad reason why some of these people talked this demonstrable untruth: They tried to uphold racism. All living (and many extinct) men do belong to a single species, *Homo sapiens* Linnaeus.

THEODOSIUS DOBZHANSKY  
Department of Zoology  
Columbia University

Books, when published, are doubly guarded against Mr. Cort's misguided approach. They are securely bound, to fix the leaves in the order approved and (oftentimes) selected by the author. Additionally, the pages are numbered, so the doubting reader may reassure himself that a thought, an idea, a proposal, was in truth intended to follow the passages on preceding pages . . . Yet Mr. Cort defies all, and parachutes into the thicket, seeking no trail, diverted by any irregularity in the terrain.

But I have been open-minded, and have set aside biases concerning . . . epistemology. I have played Mr. Cort's game; and I have found that two sentences in his essay make him a self-confessed swindler—an object lesson in that which he decries. From the statement that our laws declare illegal the direct or indirect sale by a firm to a competitor, he concludes it to be "obvious, even to a layman" (a very, very suspect assertion, when made by the layman), "that the government is crazy."

Starting with Mr. Cort's understanding of the law, certain facts become highly relevant. There are, in many

states, "fair-trade" laws, which permit wholesalers to fix the prices at which their goods may be resold. These laws were enacted to prevent ruinous, rather than beneficial competition . . . These laws work in the framework of a contract between a wholesaler and a retailer, and non-signatories are bound thereby. But we have found, from the sad experience of the nineteenth century, that agreements as to price between competitors support major economic evils. So when a manufacturer of fair-trade items benefits from the enforcement of fair-trade laws fixing prices, it is necessary that the greater evils of monopolistic price control not be resuscitated. Thus sales between competitors, in the light of at least one other law, properly require stringent limitation.

From the few facts Mr. Cort resorts to, nothing is "obvious," least of all that the government is crazy. What is most obvious is that Mr. Cort's spearfishing technique of searching for knowledge is not good for thinkers . . .

J. ANTHONY BURTON  
1959 LL.B., Law  
New York City

*David Cort writes:*

For a scientist to indict a scientific theory on the grounds of guilt by association with a political theory should be a scientific scandal, if it were not so orthodox.

The key word here is "species." Ludlow Griscom wrote in *Modern Bird Study*, "To sum up, then, we are still unable to give a final definition of a species, and there are no universally valid criteria, capable of experimental proof." A species is not defined by the limits of successful interbreeding. Many species, and some genera, do successfully interbreed and thus procreate new successful species, as the golden-winged and blue-winged warblers now interbreed to create two new recognized species. The explanation is that it takes some time for a species to achieve "reproductive isolation." These species of birds, and the species of Man, have not had that much time.

The "scientific" proposition that all living men are members of a single species is actually based on the wholly unscientific faith, initiated by great nineteenth-century Englishmen, that mankind is somehow superior to the laws of the animal kingdom. Obviously, very few living men are "pure-blooded," of any conceivable original species; the exceptions might be the pygmy negritos, the Andamanese, the Australian aborigines, etc. Most aboriginal species, if they were such, have vanished, and with them vanished thousands of years ago all grounds for the political "racist" theory. But the crossbreeding of species presents science with a large number of interesting data on which its piety righteously slams the door.

One sees communities and even families that breed very true to type. If the scientists could get a little scientific now and then, one would like to know whether these are sub-species, races or breeds. The very word, breed, reminds us of Man's discovery that he can breed out quite a variety of dogs from the (is it three?)

original species; and the dog is to modern man almost as sacred as himself.

The subject of my piece was that life does actually go on in its own way, quite independently of men's textbooks, and that the way to find out about it is to look at it, rather than to duck into the book. The crossbreeding between different species and genera is going on, no matter what the book says. To say that it can't be going on because Hitler could have made an argument out of it, has the effect of abolishing the whole scientific method and pretension.

And is it so much worse to be able to say, correctly, that all the living races of Man are members of a single genus?

Mr. Burton's letter does nothing to change my conviction that lawyers sound like badly-written characters in search of Pirandello. They can of course prove, as in a law court, that their artful hallucinations are realer than reality, until another lawyer (judge) dispels one hallucination with another. I love Mr. Burton's belief that there is some legal force in the fact that a book's pages are numbered. (But who, for example, arranged the books of the Bible, or the letters of the alphabet, if he reveres an alphabetical order?) Obviously, as a sane layman, I cannot argue law with a lawyer. Why doesn't he read the book I wrote about? [*A & P: A Study in Price-Cost Behavior and Public Policy.*]

## THE LITTLE-READ SCHOOL

### AN ADDENDUM

The following is offered as an explanatory footnote to the brief mention of "core curriculum" in "The Little-Read Schoolhouse" by Richard Franko Goldman in the Winter 1961 issue of the *FORUM*. It appeared first in the *New York Herald Tribune*.—EDITOR

*"The term core was first used on a broad scale in the early thirties . . . It was designated as an integrated program of education which was based upon the social functions procedure in curriculum development. It was also used . . . to describe courses based upon common needs or problems of adolescents, as well as correlated or fused courses.*

*"Present-day usage of the term is confused . . ."*

—*Encyclopedia of Educational Research, 1960.*

The Council for Basic Education, in Washington, has received the following definition of a "core curriculum" from a school superintendent, who says the author is unknown:

"A core curriculum is one in which the children bring apples to school, eat them, and plant the cores in the school grounds. They watch them sprout and grow into leaves and blossoms and then fruit. This is *Science*. They paste pieces of bark and twigs and leaves on paper and they paint pictures of the apples in a dish. This is *Art*.



"The children sit around under the tree singing 'In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree.' This is *Music*. The story of Johnny Appleseed is told them. This is *Library Study*. They climb the tree and pick the apples. This is *Physical Education*.

"They count the apples, 'taking away' the wormy ones. This is *Arithmetic*. In their own words, they tell what a tree is and what they felt when they saw the cores turn into trees. They also write letters to the National Apple Growers Association. This is *Language Arts*. The gifted children do enrichment research by reading Kilmer's 'Trees' or by finding out about Isaac Newton, the Apple of Discord, The Garden of Eden, William Tell and other apple-y events.

"They learn such words as *arbor*, *l'arbre*, *Apfel*, *Baum*, *manzana*. This is *Foreign Languages*.

"The boys build boxes to store the apples. This is *Industrial Arts*. And the girls bake them and sauce them and pie them. This is *Homemaking*. Then everyone eats them and learns about their nutritional value. This is *Health Education*.

"These activities have been performed without a textbook or a workbook.

"When all the apples are gone, they take the cores once again and plant them in the school grounds and watch them grow and flower and fruit. Pretty soon, you cannot see the school for the trees. This is called *The End of Education*."

## PHILOSOPHIAE DOCTOR

RICHARD BIRDSALL

The year 1961 is the centennial not only of the South's firing on Fort Sumter but also of Yale's awarding the first Ph. D. in America. The events have at least this in common; both have led to virtually interminable wars, battles of books that are fought with some vigor even now a century after. Like all institutions in a free society, the Ph. D. has been subject to continual criticism. The criticism has provoked rebuttal, and so the controversial literature has grown—voluminous enough at this date for several doctoral dissertations on itself. It is much to the credit of the academic community that the best of this literature, both for and against the Ph. D., has come from the professors themselves.

A generation ago, the noted literary scholar Stuart Sherman came forward as one of the most outspoken

*Richard Birdsall holds the Ph.D. from Columbia University. An assistant professor of history at Connecticut College, he has published in various historical journals and is the author of Berkshire County: A Cultural History (Yale University Press, 1959). He is now working on a cultural history of New England in the Federalist period.*

critics of the Ph. D. when he condemned the graduate school as a peculiarly effective device for squeezing the vital juices out of young men. Sherman indicted the man with the Ph. D. both for his lack of broad, humane culture and for his lack of intellectual integrity. The best of his undergraduate students, said Sherman, never entered graduate school; "the next best dropped out after the first year; the mediocre after the second year; the worst finished the course and went forth to reproduce their kind"—the professorial type. The type could be identified by its "pedantry, indolence, timidity, and intellectual quietism, which is a euphemism for the sluggish tolerance of men without philosophic conviction or intellectual purpose."

Voicing a critique more detailed than Sherman's, Earl J. McGrath, former US Commissioner of Education and now an administrator at Columbia's Teachers College, has emerged as the current spokesman for the case against the graduate school (see his *The Graduate School and the Decline of Liberal Education*; 1959). At the core of McGrath's criticism is the charge that the graduate schools, by an excessive emphasis on research, are neglecting their main function, the production of teachers for liberal arts colleges. He sees a decline of liberal education in the failure of the colleges to maintain what "had been their heritage and their glory, to wit, the function of instructing young people in the Western European intellectual and spiritual tradition." Thus the studies of most college students exhibit no "common body of knowledge, intellectual procedures or philosophic wholeness." This unfortunate condition has been caused largely by the liberal arts faculties, and the faculties have been led away from their true function by their graduate school training.

The most significant of McGrath's criticisms of the Ph.D.-trained teacher are: first, he is a man of narrow competence whose knowledge is so fragmented as to prevent a true perspective on the more general questions; second, he is less interested in the dissemination of knowledge than in the discovery of new knowledge—"an original contribution to learning," however trivial; third (implied), he has developed a professional pride that edges over into arrogance and tends to isolate him from common life. The charges are familiar ones, and clearly there is some truth in them; but I should like to suggest some balancing arguments that bear on each.

That the Ph. D. is a man of narrow knowledge cannot be denied, but this is best seen as a tragic necessity, an adjustment to the vast quantity of man's knowledge and to that "seasickness" that Henry Adams said he experienced before the shifting horizons of the twentieth century. The Ph. D. is simply following the great imperative of modern times, the division of labor. Only so can a man work his way with Thoreau down through the "slush of opinion" to plant his feet on the ground, granted that his plot of ground is narrow. And so he can finally stand, and stand he must if he is to teach with any authority amid the bewildering relativisms of the mid-twentieth century. Thus the experience of coming to grips at first hand with a small part of man's knowledge, a facing of facts, is a psychological necessity for the man who would stand up to face a class in a world where a knowledge of the clas-



sics or of Christian theology no longer passes as moral credentials.

Occasionally the Ph. D. may look across the gulf to the men whose stance appears at first to be just the opposite of his, the existentialist philosophers. He admires the courage of these thinkers who demand that each person face the whole of life squarely and ask the great questions. And then he wryly notes how soon after asking the great questions the existentialists lapse into pure irrationalism. But is not their dictum "truth is subjectivity" psychologically sympathetic to the Ph.D.'s retreat into a narrow specialism? Kierkegaard emigrated to a narrow, constricted world of fierce certainties in his own mind. But who is to say that he was wiser than Newton who saw himself as a child playing on the seashore of the vast ocean of truth? In the interior worlds of the existentialists, the pervasive subjectivism in the arts, and the narrow domain of the modern scholar, we are witnessing analogous phenomena. All are the results of men's efforts at psychic self-preservation through building walls of protection against the mystery and terror of life in the twentieth century.

Those like McGrath who suggest that a return to the clear truths of the Western tradition is all that we need are unaware of the sharpness of the break which Western man made with his past around the turn of the century. We, the heirs of Marx, Freud, Nietzsche, and Pareto have, no doubt, a deeper understanding of man than our predecessors; but it brings us no peace, no philosophic synthesis. We have numerous "half-seeings" but no general vision, no common faith to integrate our education of youth. Of modern educators, no one has stated the problem better than Carl Becker, as he wrote an answer in 1926 to five bewildered freshmen who wanted to know what college was all about:

Many people appear to think that professors possess some secret of knowledge and wisdom which would set the students right as to the meaning of things if they would only impart it. This, I do assure you, is an illusion. I could write you a letter on behalf of Five Bewildered Professors which would make the five bewildered freshmen appear cocksure by comparison. The professors are in the same boat. They don't know either what it's all about. They tried to find out when in college, and they have been trying ever since. Most of them, if they are wise, don't expect ever to find out, not really . . . we have as yet no foundations, no certainties. We live in a world of incredibly rapid change, a world of naturalistic science and of physico-chemico-libido psychology. There are no longer any certainties either in life or in thought.

The modern professor can hardly assume the omniscient tone of such distinguished predecessors as Timothy Dwight, Mark Hopkins, and Francis Wayland as they taught their wide-ranging courses in moral philosophy. Any thought that the reorganization of graduate school training would enable modern teachers to emulate the nineteenth-century professors who knew answers to the tough questions is "positive thinking" at its worst. While the Ph.D. is no final answer, it is a possible interim stance that is at least practicable.

In discussing the criticism that the scholar's mania for

new knowledge decreases his ability to disseminate knowledge, I think it is possible to move from the ground of mere defense to that of counterattack. Very often the scholar-teacher brings into the classroom something of the excitement he feels in his pursuit of a new interpretation or of new materials. Further, he can identify himself with the student; both professor and student are fellow members of a joint stock company of intellectual adventurers. Scholarly activity may serve as a protective against the complacency and sloth that often affect the man who stands at the center of truth and knowledge and expounds. Witness the ease and confidence with which Mark Hopkins refuted Darwin without even reading the English scientist's books. The scholar on the college faculty, in his dissatisfaction with the present state of knowledge, exerts a steady pull on the student body toward a higher intellectual life. This is not a dangerous super-intellectualism but a healthy corrective to the heavy downward pull of our mass culture.

Allied with the scholar-teacher's interest in new knowledge is a curious kind of negative benefit. Since a fair part of his energy is expended outside of the classroom, he will rarely indulge in the constricting practice of over-teaching. Comenius' wise dictum, "The more the teacher teaches, the less the student learns," is applicable to all levels of education but especially to the colleges. We learn by doing, not by being taught; and of course the most important things can never be taught; they must be learned.

A teacher in pursuit of new knowledge may instill in the student a spirit of adventurous self-education; the teacher who is only a disseminator exudes a certain complacency. He implies that he already possesses culture and that culture is a finished body of knowledge. The scholar conveys a sense of the living, dynamic nature of a culture in which past and present illumine each other; e.g., Franklin Roosevelt drew heavily on the Jeffersonian mythology, and out of the New Deal period there came new scholarly interpretations of Jefferson and his era. It was the emphasis on dissemination of knowledge over original scholarship that Henry Adams found near the center of that vast complacency which was Boston in the 1870's:

Boston is a curious place. Its business in life is to breed and to educate. The parent lives for his children; the child, when educated himself, becomes a parent, or becomes an educator, or is both. But no further result is ever reached. Just as at twenty the parent reproduces himself in a child, so the teacher reproduces himself in his scholar. But neither as child nor as scholar does the new generation do more than devote itself to become in its turn parent and teacher. Nothing ever comes of it all . . . As an educator and not as a parent, I am exasperated by the practical working of the system at college, where the teacher assumes that teaching is his end in life, and that he has no time to work for original results. But when a society has reached this point, it acquires a self-complacency which is wildly exasperating. My fingers itch to puncture it; to do something which will sting it into impropriety.

(continued on page 56)

# Columbia

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## CHRONICLE

### A concise review of recent news from Columbia University

Three more Columbia University faculty members have received appointments in the new Administration within the past few months: Richard N. Gardner, professor of law, was appointed Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs; Calvert Magruder, lecturer in law, heads a special panel advising President Kennedy on problems of ethics and conflict of interest in government; and Arthur F. Burns, John Bates Clark Professor of Economics, was named by President Kennedy to the twenty-one-member Advisory Committee on Labor-Management Policy for the promotion of sound wage and price policies.

• The power of the press, radio, or television to influence public opinion is not as great as is generally believed, according to Herbert Hyman, professor of sociology and assistant director of the Bureau of Applied Social Research at Columbia University. Speaking recently at the University of Texas on the part played by mass media in shaping public opinion, Mr. Hyman noted that eight out of ten adults read at least one newspaper and watch one hour of television daily. But, he said, the effect of this considerable attention is small—only slight amounts of news are absorbed and recall is poor. "Repeated tests show the public to be ignorant of a great many political facts."

Mr. Hyman also pointed out that, contrary to the opinion held by some that media "use people" and

thereby transform public opinion, in truth people "use the media" to fit their pre-formed ideas—"People pick what they like and avoid what they dislike." Further, since the phenomenon of news itself is so commonplace in the lives of Americans, custom stales its force.

Mr. Hyman said that there is some evidence to support the theory that media can influence broad political attitudes. But, he continued, studies conducted to discover short-term effects of newspaper or magazine reading, radio listening, or television viewing, support the generalization that "such effects are small."

• As a witness for the prosecution in the trial of Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem, a Columbia historian spoke of the Nazi destruction of Jewish communities in Europe. In his testimony, Salo W. Baron, professor of Jewish history, literature, and institutions and director of the University's Center of Israeli Studies, stated that although there were no precise figures available on the number of Jews who had been killed by the Nazis, an estimate could be arrived at by considering that the Jewish population of the world had decreased from 16,500,000 in 1930 to 10,500,000 at the end of World War II. In discussing anti-Semitism through history, Professor Baron pointed up the difference between persecution of Jews in the Middle Ages—which was a religious matter—and the Nazi persecution, conducted according to "biological" theories.

• Ninety-nine years after the Battle of Shiloh, a Civil War general has been allowed to publicly explain his part in it—and depreciate that played by Ulysses S. Grant—in a 35-page letter he wrote in 1865. Major General Don Carlos Buell's previously unpublished version of the still-controversial battle appeared this spring in the *Columbia Library Columns*, a publication of the Friends of the Columbia Libraries.

An unexpected Confederate attack on Grant's army the first day of the Battle of Shiloh had caused heavy casualties and had nearly routed the Union forces. The fortu-

itous arrival of reinforcements from Ohio, commanded by General Buell, strengthened Union morale and power, and on the following day the North was victorious.

Although the controversy is mainly over emphasis, according to Associate Professor of History Eric L. McKittrick in his comments on the letter, it revolves about three points: 1) How much Grant's and Sherman's carelessness contributed to their being surprised by the Confederate attack; 2) Whether Buell's troops were too slow in arriving; and 3) The importance of the Ohio reinforcements.

In a letter published in January 1865 in the *United States Service Magazine*, Sherman did not, Buell thought, give the latter proper credit for the second day's victory. The letter he wrote in rebuttal to Sherman remained unpublished because the magazine went out of existence. Grant, himself, stood aloof from the arguments. Sherman's assertions, in Buell's words (and spelling) "virtually deny that [Grant's] Army . . . was reduced to very straitened circumstances on the 6th of April . . . They make General Sherman the dominant figure . . . Popular favor has given too much weight to Sherman's expressions to make it a gratuitous labor to expose his fallacies . . ." Buell's letter states that Grant needed help badly, that Buell arrived *sooner* than his orders had commanded because of his not receiving them; and most importantly, that "public opinion . . . has adjudged . . . [Grant's position] on the west bank of the river . . . an error, seeing that it was considered to be in the presence of a superior adversary . . . [Grant's army] was rescued from a destruction which had virtually overtaken it, by the timely presence and valor of the army of the Ohio . . ."

The letter does not end the controversy over Shiloh. But it is considered Buell's most direct refutation of Sherman's account of the battle. The letter was originally discovered and purchased by Allan Nevins, De Witt Clinton Professor Emeritus of History at Columbia, about twenty years ago. He presented it recently to the Columbia Libraries.

## "The next six years are the present"

The financial position and fiscal needs of Columbia University were set forth this spring by President Grayson Kirk in a special report entitled "The Next Six Years Are the Present." The report listed the University's income and expenditures for 1959-1960 and went on to gauge the amounts necessary for the improvement of existing facilities and the addition of new ones:

### INCOME

Tuition and other student fees	\$13,675,754
Endowment and investment income drawn on	10,211,617
Gifts for current use and receipts for specific purposes drawn on	8,932,643
Receipts and reimbursements from Presbyterian Hospital, clinics, and others	2,217,702
Government research contracts and grants	19,148,305
Auxiliary services	3,561,244
	<u>\$57,747,265</u>

### EXPENDITURES

Teaching and educational administration	\$24,976,093
Financial aid to students; scholarships, etc.	2,703,154
Library	1,826,379
Operation of buildings and grounds	2,574,722
Business and financial administration	806,086
Provision for major improvements to plant	750,000
Retirement and other employee benefits	2,538,266
Costs directly applicable to government research contracts and grants	17,161,304
Auxiliary services	3,561,244
Miscellaneous	264,943
	<u>\$57,162,191</u>

*Excess of Income over Expenditures* \$585,074

President Kirk foresaw and proposed increases during and after the next six years to cover higher faculty salaries, additional student aid, library support, and related costs, totalling \$6,000,000 over present budget allowances. Faculty salaries, he said, must increase from the present scale: \$5,500 for an instructor up to \$22,500 for a full professor must become \$7,000 for an instructor up to \$30,000 for a full professor, an annual increase of \$3,000,000. Student aid, which rose from \$2,703,154 in 1959-60 to \$3,200,000 in 1961, must continue to be supplemented after 1966 by \$2,300,000 per year over present expenditures, to a total of \$5,500,000 per year. Within the next six years library support must rise cumulatively by \$100,000 per year, resulting in a

total increased cost of \$600,000 per year for library operations after 1966-67. President Kirk also pointed out that buildings and grounds operations will increase sharply as buildings now scheduled for construction are completed and put into use.

In regard to new buildings, President Kirk submitted a schedule of proposed construction and remodeling, and reported on buildings under way or recently completed.

### BUILDINGS COMPLETED (Opening Fall, 1961)

Law School	\$ 8,500,000
Seeley Wintersmith Mudd (Engineering)	8,110,000

### NEW CONSTRUCTION

Two Columbia College residence halls	8,000,000
Gymnasium	8,000,000
Arts Center	8,000,000
Graduate School of Business	6,000,000
International Studies Center	6,000,000
Engineering Center: Terrace Building	2,558,000
Tower Building	4,665,000
Auditorium	550,000
Computing Center	550,000
Lamont Geological Observatory: Seismology, Marine Biology, Oceanography, Geophysics (4 buildings)	2,400,000
New York School of Social Work	3,000,000
Women students' residence	3,000,000
Graduate residence hall	7,720,000
Married students' residences (3)	3,000,000
Plaza over Amsterdam Avenue	750,000

### REMODELING AND RECONSTRUCTION

Conversion of School of Mines to house School of General Studies (over donations already received)	540,000
Other remodeling and reconstruction of existing buildings	6,620,000

The total cost of new construction on campus is expected to be \$68,000,000. President Kirk reported that nearly \$5,000,000 was now in hand for this, including most of the funds needed for the conversion of the School of Mines. The remaining amount required to carry out the University's projected building program is \$63,000,000.

The President's report has been sent to more than 78,000 alumni and 10,000 members of the University staff and friends of Columbia in an effort, as President Kirk pointed out in its preface, "to make the general public thoroughly familiar with [colleges and universities'] financial problems and operations."



(continued from page 53)

In puncturing our own complacency, the Russian challenge has convinced most of us of the value of the scholarly work in the sciences and the humanities done by the faculties of our liberal arts colleges. But one wonders just how much scholarly research our rather materialistic society would have supported unless "forced" to by the graduate school pattern imposed on liberal arts faculties. The people pay for education and get research. This is devious, but surely no more so than paying for breakfast cereal and getting television entertainment. The "method of invention" is a necessary way of life to the nation that would survive in the sharp competition of the modern age.

The third charge, that graduate school training inculcates snobbery, is simply true. Inevitably, any group that maintains certain critical standards of performance will develop an *esprit de corps*. And one aspect of this is a condescending view of all outsiders. But this is to look only at the fault. The accompanying virtue, the professional conscience, has been called the lifeblood of a civilization. Graduate-school training does something to develop the professional conscience. The confused flounderings of the graduate student trying to find a dissertation topic, the many hours of coolie labor collecting his material, the rare occasions of insight as he organizes his chapters, and the laborious writing and re-writing give him at least a dim sense of what Justice Holmes meant in saying: "No man has earned the right to intellectual ambition until he has learned to lay his course by a star which he has never seen . . . Only when you have worked alone—when you have felt around you a black gulf of solitude more isolating than that which surrounds the dying man . . . will you have achieved." The dissertation is a lonely business. While the law and medical students have only the hurdles of set examinations and the reinforcement afforded by fellow-sufferers, the graduate student in the final stage is the driver and the driven; he pushes on alone. The severity of this test of self-discipline is confirmed by the quantity of never-completed dissertations.

The contents of the professional conscience is shaped in part by a large quantity of routine work. The hours of sheer plugging that consume the bulk of the time of the graduate student have a salutary and disenchanting effect. They liberate him from the insidious and rather American idea that work can readily become play. Work does become play but only to the man who has passed beyond the foothills into the upland of mastery and of freedom. Having completed his dissertation, the student has more respect for Martin Luther's epigram: "The road to heaven lies through hell," and rather less respect for the more facile of the progressive educators who implied that it could be "roses all the way." If Henry James was right in calling America the land of the short cut, the Ph.D. has a wisdom that his countrymen sorely need.

If I have succeeded in qualifying some of McGrath's criticisms of the graduate schools, I have by no means demolished them; the Ph.D. remains an imperfect institution. But its central imperfection is of a kind to justify the years of discipline; it is the imperfection of man's middle state—the state between complacency and despair, between Faustian illusions and existential ignorance. While hacking his path out to the frontiers of knowledge, the graduate student, if not self-deluded, will gain at once an awareness of the possibilities of his own mind and of the vast regions of his own ignorance. And this hopeless imbalance between his knowing and his not knowing will save him, if anything will, from the premature repose of intellectual narcissism. Kierkegaard has noted that: "Sloth, inactivity, the affectation of superiority over against the finite—this is poor jesting, or rather is no jest at all. But to shorten one's hours of sleep and buy up the hours of the day and not to spare oneself, and then to understand that the whole is a jest; aye, that is earnestness." To this the doctor of philosophy, at his best, will know enough to say Amen.



